A JUBILEE HISTORY

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA

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OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA.

A

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OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OF VICTORIA,

OR,

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF PRESBYTERIANISM FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE COLONY TO 1888.

BY

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PREFACE.

It has occurred to many that the Jubilee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria was opportune for the publication of a history of her rise and progress. In the year 1878, the General Assembly were so impressed with the necessity of at once taking steps to obtain materials for a permanent record that a committee was appointed to correspond with members of the Church, especially the older ones, with a view to the collection of historical facts. The aged brethren were able to impart information which could not be so well, if at all, supplied by others. Many of the pioneers of Presbyterianism in the colony, chiefly by reason of age, had disappeared. Numbers of their survivors, after having laboured during a period of twenty years and more, were rapidly passing away, and soon it might be impossible to secure important knowledge of facts, which had been interwoven with their life and experience.

The Committee set to work with all zeal, and made considerable progress in the task assigned to them. But no definite instructions have ever been given them by the Supreme Court, to give practical effect to their efforts by publishing the results. The present work is independent of that action of the Assembly and of the labours of the Committee. To some brethren it appeared that the great want of the Church on the occasion of her Jubilee, in the way of a public record, should be a full and detailed history of her whole life and work. There might be difficulty, however, in finding a person, in a community so full of hard toil, both in sacred and civil offices, who could undertake a task so arduous and responsible.

The writer is one of the oldest surviving pioneers in the Presbyterian ministry, and has been frequently counselled to charge himself with the performance of the duty. So long as he held a

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pastoral charge it was impossible for him to listen to the advice. Having been relieved of the responsibilities of a settled ministry, one great obstacle was removed. He was one of those who had been appealed to by the Assembly's Committee for early experiences, and having in answer to that appeal prepared a considerable amount of material, it now appears as if this preliminary work had formed the foundation of the task required. There was one barrier to his seriously attempting the work—the fear of commencing what at his time of life he might be unable to finish. All that he could set before his mind as practicable in beginning the task was, to collect from all sources authentic materials within his reach, in order to unfold the past history of the Church, and to put the whole together, as long and as far as he might be enabled to do so, in some presentable shape, but with small hope of being able to produce a satisfactory record through the press. By consulting all the original sources of information available, he has been able to secure, beyond expectation, an abundance of material, in reference, it is believed, to all matters of historical interest and importance.

We are not unmindful that a history of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria was published in London in 1877. That work has doubtless served its purpose, having brought the history down to 1875. The volume, however, having been finally prepared and published at Home—the author had left the colony before making the fullest collection of material—the consequence has been that his work is not so full of important occurrences as one would have desired. But, besides this, had the work been more complete than it is, the lapse of thirteen years, bringing us to the Jubilee, would amply justify a new and full record of the state and progress of the Church, especially as the period since 1875 embraces events of no ordinary importance. The present author has the advantage of being able to speak as a personal witness of the exciting and revolutionary condition of society which obtained at the beginning of the gold discovery, from 1851, as well as of what has transpired up till 1888.

It will be necessary to relate at length the results of discussions and conferences, divisions and healing of breaches, which stand inseparably bound up with the greatest outstanding event of the

whole Jubilee history—viz., the Union of the different bodies of Presbyterians. At the same time the pleasing task will fall to the writer of tracing the happy fruit which has accrued to the Presbyterian community from the time of the general Union, through nearly thirty years of the Jubilee period.

The latter part of the history has not been without the occurrence of earnest deliberations and discussions in the Courts of the Church on matters of grave importance, affecting the foundations of her faith and character. These matters demand a faithful rehearsal, if justice is to be done in recording events affecting the vital interests of the Denomination, and the author has been careful to allow the records, as far as possible, to speak for themselves.

It remains only to notice that a free use has been made of the original "Church records," in order to obtain the most reliable information and to perpetuate names, dates, and events of the past which constitute the backbone of a permanent record. The Church has a right to expect that its antiquities be preserved, that they be true as matters of fact, and that they be as full and accurate as possible. The present, if time continue, will one day be a portion of antiquity, and as such its events will be prized as precious material. It seems to be an essential characteristic of the human mind to pry into the elements of the remotest past. This is, doubtless, an honourable feeling. The destruction of historic memorials is justly reprobated as a mark of barbarism. Great privileges and transcendent blessing come down to us from the past, and it is a noble sentiment to honour the names of departed benefactors, to celebrate their heroic deeds, to imitate their shining excellencies, and to hold up to the admiration of posterity their brilliant examples.

It has been the object of the author to condense, as well as may be, the facts which compose the eventful history of the Presbyterian Church during the first fifty years of her existence and experience in the Colony. The effort, however, has issued in a larger compilation than was intended, resulting in a book embracing two volumes in one. The remarkable advancement made by the Church during these fifty years could not have been satisfactorily delineated without an extended collection of facts and incidents. It is believed the candid reader will find that the advancement made by the Presbyterian

Church, in all the elements of substantial prosperity, is by no means the least important portion of the history of the marvellous colony of Victoria.

Living as we do in a country which—although the remotest from the great centres of Western civilisation, yet, within fifty years—has risen from a wilderness to a population of over one million souls—is favoured with an independent bi-cameral parliament—can show an annual revenue of more than seven and a half millions of pounds, and every year increasing—yields a product of manufacturing industry equal to fifteen million pounds per annum—owns a network of Railways equal to twenty-four million pounds in value—enjoys the privilege of a weekly mail and telegraphic communication with Great Britian—produces annually as the result of agricultural, pastoral, and mining pursuits upwards of twenty millions—possesses a University with three affiliated Denominational Colleges, a National system of primary education that is secular, free, and compulsory, besides any number of other educational Institutions—in these circumstances it seems desirable to have recorded the steps, earliest and latest, that have been taken to supply the community with gospel ordinances according to the Presbyterian Form, and also to rehearse the progress made by this branch of the Christian Church during the fifty years of the Colony's astonishing history.

The Presbyterian Church Jubilee has been reached. The author's task in recounting the doings of Presbyterianism during half a century is finished. He is far from saying that his work has been satisfactory to himself. But if his rehearsal, with all its imperfections, should in any degree advance the interests of the Presbyterian Church, he will not only be pleased but honoured. He has humbly endeavoured to give due prominence to the vital principles on which she is based.

He would commend his humble effort in the service of the Great Head of the Church to His blessing and over-ruling power, as well as solicit a favourable acceptance from the ministers, office-bearers, and members of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria to whom he would respectfully dedicate the volume.

" Race shall Thy works praise unto race;
The mighty works show done by Thee;
I will speak of the glorious grace,
And honour of Thy majesty.

" Thy wondrous works I will record;
By men the might shall be extolled,
Of all Thy dreadful acts, O Lord;
And I Thy greatness will unfold.

" They utter shall abundantly
The memory of Thy goodness great,
And shall sing praises cheerfully,
While I Thy righteousness relate.

" The wonders of Thy kingdom show
Shall they, and of Thy power tell;
That so men's sons His deeds may know,
His kingdom's grace that doth excel."

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A JUBILEE HISTORY

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA.

Book I.

CHAPTER I.

RISE OF PRESBYTERIANISM IN NEW SOUTH WALES AND IN PORT PHILLIP, 1823–1837–1841.

In speaking of the infant state of the Presbyterian Church in Australia, with its feebleness, its struggles, and its slow growth, our attention is necessarily drawn to the New South Wales colony, as the only one then in existence. She is, therefore, the oldest of all the colonies, not only in Australia, but in Australasia. She is the mother of us all, and is so far entitled to respect, if not to some degree of the reverence due to age. Her origin, it is true, could never give her any claim to the loving homage, which might well be demanded by a State of uncontaminated birth. Having repudiated, however, after a dark period of painful, injurious, and depressing experience, her unhallowed relations, she is not now to be reproached for evils from which she has effected for herself, as soon as it was possible, a full deliverance. "He that is without sin let him cast the first stone at her." We cannot, then, treat of the earliest breathings of Presbyterian life in these sunny southern climes without remembering that the other colonies, with whose names we are now so familiar, were then non-existent. It is also to be borne in mind, that the existing Presbyterian Church of the Colony of Victoria has become stamped with various new features since the period when she was first ushered into being in Australia. Her birth and infantile state, indeed, preceded the existence of this colony of Victoria, where she has taken root and grown to a respectable height. After she was planted here she was still the offspring of New South Wales. The relations under which she sprang into existence in the old colony were different, in various important points, from those under which she has expanded in the new. The points of difference, it is true, do not affect essential principles, but simply developments, which do not touch fundamental doctrine. The great historical standards of Presbyterianism, throughout all the changes

that have passed over her, are maintained in their essential completeness.

It is impossible in a history of the colonial Presbyterian Church to overlook the relations which she sustained to the Parent churches in Scotland. More especially, the startling event of the disruption in the Scottish Established Church in 1843, is an important factor, which must be taken into account in rehearsing the story of the Victorian church. That great ecclesiastical earthquake sent its vibrations far and wide, affecting not only churches purely Presbyterian, but even more or less deeply impressing Christendom. That convulsion could not fail to produce a very decided effect in the experience of the New South Wales Presbyterian Church. Having started into existence at least twenty years before the disruption, the colonial church could scarcely have any other character than that of an offshoot of the Establishment, up till the time of that exciting occurrence. At the immense distance of New South Wales from the scene of action in Scotland, and considering the then slow transmission of intelligence, it could not be known for a considerable time, the full amount of disturbance which would result, from the exciting movements at headquarters.

Neither was it till the lapse of a number of years after the Scottish division that any denomination in Scotland outside the Establishment was represented in the colony. The United Presbyterian Church had its first seed sown in the Port Phillip district in the beginning of 1846. The disturbing effect made by the disruption on the Colonial Church was felt in some measure sooner than perhaps might have been anticipated. But, though there was agitation, it was several years before the dissensions culminated in a division similar to what transpired at Home. Till 1846 there was only one Presbyterian Church in the one Australian colony of New South Wales. After that period, the church was divided, and in 1847 there were the representatives in Port Phillip of the three great Presbyterian bodies in Scotland.

The first notices of Presbyterianism in Australia have to do solely with its representation of the form established in Scotland. Considering the character of the colony at its foundation in 1788, the limited population, and the fact that in new colonies the Church of England generally takes precedence, it will not be considered surprising that there was no Presbyterian minister and no Presbyterian organization in Australia till 1823.

To this statement, indeed, an honourable exception must be recorded. As early as 1802 about a dozen Presbyterian families had emigrated from the south of Scotland, and had settled on the banks of the Hawkesbury River. They had received from Government a free passage, a hundred acres of land, and some free stores. No sooner were they settled than they set about erecting a church, in which to hold divine service among themselves. The building cost £400. This was, doubtless, the first Presbyterian Church in Australia. The meeting of these faithful Presbyterian Christians was, however, regarded by the Government with suspicion. Accord-

ingly, Lieutenant Bell and a constable were commissioned to visit the place, and were instructed to disperse the gathering if necessary to insure the public safety. It need hardly be stated that the meeting was not disturbed. The people were not conspirators against the Sydney Cæsar. They were only the peaceful and loyal subjects of one Jesus, a King.

The colony of New South Wales was 35 years old before any Presbyterian minister landed on its shores. The early history of the Presbyterian Church is essentially and very largely interwoven with the name of the Rev. John Dunmore Lang, M.A., D.D. The Rev. Dr. Lang was a native of Ayrshire, and was ordained by the Presbytery of Irvine, on 30th September, 1822. The fame of Australia as a country highly favourable for colonial settlement had begun before that period to spread through Great Britain. It required a considerable time before those who were settled at Sydney could themselves know the character and capabilities of the vast island continent, on one little spot on the east coast of which they were resident. It would require a still longer period before information could reach home, and after it reached, before it could be circulated to any great extent, and after it was circulated, before it could be appreciated and believed. Men could not be expected to break up home connections unless sufficient attractions in the far-distant field could be presented, and these attractions be proved to be sufficiently well founded. It behoved the first colonists to be gentlemen, more or less, of means, of intelligence, and of enterprise. Along with these, however, families, doubtless, would embark under engagement to be their assistants, holding subordinate positions. Masters and servants, in many instances, would emigrate together, and, as the settlement advanced, whole families, of all classes, trades, and professions, would follow. Usually a new colony does not make it its first business to have ordinances of a Christian character established among its members, and a minister set over them in regular form. Instead of combining and seeking eagerly after the services of a competent pastor, the pastor, guided simply by the calls of duty, generally first seeks after them.

Whatever might be the moving cause of the Rev. Dr. Lang's resolution to emigrate to Australia, it appears that his determination was formed when the time for his ripe decision came as to his field of labour. There can be no doubt in regard to the fact that there were in the colony many Presbyterians, not only in Sydney but throughout the country, who stood in urgent need of spiritual instruction and oversight at the time of his arrival. As little uncertainty could there be, that many communications from them from time to time would reach the ears of their former parish ministers, stating and lamenting their destitution as to religious services. At all events, when Dr. Lang presented himself to the Presbytery of Irvine, and received ordination at their hands, it was with a view to his at once setting out for residence and labour in New South Wales. As soon as arrangements could be made, Dr. Lang embarked, and reached Sydney in May, 1823

The Rev. Dr. Lang was in many respects remarkably fitted to be a pioneer of the Presbyterian Church in the colony. He was a graduate in the University of Glasgow, was one of its most eminent and honoured students, and was distinguished in a high degree for his physical and mental vigour. He was the first Presbyterian minister to preach the gospel in Sydney. He became the founder of the Presbyterian Church in Australia. In the month of June, 1823, he began his work as a herald of the glorious gospel of God's grace to man. The novelty of the work to which he now publicly set his face with firm resolution was sufficient to attract a large attendance and excite a lively interest. The learned ability of his discourses, and the superior character of his address, as well as the simplicity of his style, the soundness of his doctrine, and the practical nature of his expositions, all secured for him a cordial welcome, and enabled him very soon to gather an earnest, attached, and influential congregation.

After a stirring commencement of services in the Presbyterian form, it was speedily brought to light that there were many colonists in the city and elsewhere who had emigrated from Scotland, and who were earnestly longing for the forms of worship to which they had been accustomed at home. After labouring in his sacred vocation two years, he had, by careful inquiry and observation, gained a considerable amount of experience. He felt qualified for imparting to people at home a large measure of information about the new and extensive territory of Australia, in order to excite their interest, and prepare the way for a series of shiploads of suitable colonists. Accordingly he made the best arrangements in his power for the continued maintenance of religious services in his congregation, and in 1825 he set sail for England.

Two years was but a short time during which to collect information respecting a vast and unexplored country, but for a man of his discriminating powers and indefatigable energy, it was not a task so difficult as it would have been to many. Besides, his object was not by any means merely to spread information on all kinds of subjects affecting an unknown region. He had chiefly in view to communicate such intelligence as was necessary to induce suitable emigration and to awaken a lively interest in the propagation of the gospel, and in the extension of education in Australia. His great aim was to secure ministers of the Presbyterian faith, and teachers of the young, from home. The matter was one of such urgency that mere correspondence by letter would necessarily occasion much delay, especially as no epistolary communication could so well as the living voice convey the knowledge, remove the prejudices, and overcome the objections and fears, which it was necessary to do in order to promote the emigration required.

Having accomplished his mission with a considerable amount of success, he established schools, after his return, in Sydney and in the vicinity, where knots of population had become settled. The teachers proved themselves capable men, and Dr. Lang had the

satisfaction of seeing the schools prosper. His great designs, however, were not accomplished merely by the establishment of schools for the young. He made excursions through the country, more or less extended, for the purpose of ascertaining the spiritual wants of the population, opening preaching stations, and taking steps for the settlement of ministers in due time. During a period of about eight years he laboured single-handed, without ministerial coadjutors. Accordingly he resolved on a second voyage home, in 1831, to bring out ministers. There was for a long time, among the ministers and people at home, a large amount of timidity and caution in following counsels to emigrate, and in listening to the sanguine prospects presented by a pleasing oratory. And right it should be so. Any step, however wise and judicious, taken in the way of going off to Australia, whether on the part of ministers or people, involved serious consequences. Hence the emigrating of ministers to a country of which so little was known, and whose population was so limited, was not of a rapid growth. At length, however, in 1831, he succeeded in securing the services of no fewer than five emigrating ministers. These he saw settled in as many preaching stations which he had previously formed. In the same year, so anxious was he for the increase of the population, especially from Scotland, that, in a most generous and unselfish spirit, he introduced into the colony a large number of Presbyterian emigrants at his own expense. These were the results of a second voyage home.

With this important accession to the Presbyterian ministry in the colony it was competent for the ministers to meet, either with or without representative elders from the congregations, and to constitute themselves the Presbytery of New South Wales. This was effected in 1832. In 1833 Dr. Lang undertook a third voyage home, with a view to swell the number of free emigrants to the colony, in order to raise the moral tone of society and gradually to obliterate all traces of the convict element.

His desire, at the same time, was to secure a still increasing number of teachers and of ministers. To a large extent he devoted his time and energies for the advancement of emigration, not strictly Presbyterian, on a large scale; and, in his great zeal for the success of his liberal-hearted schemes, he involved himself in pecuniary responsibilities and embarrassing relations. It is painful to be obliged to record that, in his distressing losses, sustained by an excess of self-denying zeal, though possibly not always by the most wise and judicious measures, for the best interests of the colony, he did not receive that helpful consideration from Government, or even that practical sympathy from any quarter, to which he was entitled. He laboured hard, and all but sacrificed himself for the good—temporal and spiritual—of others, and had only poor returns for his pains.

The introduction of Presbyterian ministers into the colony was an innovation, and there was no provision made by Government for their recognition and for their claims to be treated on equal terms

with their brethren of the Church of England. Through the instrumentality, however, of the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland, who memorialized the British Government, it was decreed that Presbyterian ministers should, on the same principle as those of the Church of England, receive a share of the ecclesiastical endowments, in proportion to their numbers. The following was the rule:—A congregation of 100 persons was entitled to £100 from the Treasury towards the minister's stipend; of 200 persons, to £150; of 500 persons, to £200, as the maximum; and if any congregation should collect £300 for church buildings, they were entitled to an equal amount. These emoluments were granted on the ground simply of the Presbyterians forming part of the general colonial community, not on the ground of any standing previously held in the old country. In every case, before payment was made, a printed form required to be signed by the Moderator of the Presbytery to which the recipient belonged, certifying to his discharge of duty.

In 1836, Dr. Lang went home for the fourth time for the purpose of bringing out additional ministers. On this occasion he would not be satisfied with fewer, if possible, than twenty. While at home he visited various countries besides Scotland, going to England, to Ireland, even to the Continent—more particularly to Germany—lecturing everywhere at public meetings, presenting the attractions of the country to well-ordered emigrants, and especially seeking to induce ministers—not necessarily or exclusively Scotch Presbyterians—to consider the call to emigrate.

It is not necessary fully to follow the career, or to descant on the many-sided movements, schemes, and troubles of the great pioneer of Presbyterianism in Australia. It would be impossible to do justice to the history of the Presbyterian Church in Victoria without giving a large share of attention to the Rev. John Dunmore Lang, M.A., D.D. There is no figure which presents itself so prominently, or thrusts itself so persistently on our notice, in the early history of the colony, whether it is viewed politically or ecclesiastically, as that of Dr. Lang. In attempting a description of the rise and progress of the Presbyterian cause in Victoria, it was indispensable we should speak of its incipient stage in New South Wales, before the Port Phillip Province, or colony of Victoria, had any existence. If so, to speak at all of the Presbyterian Church in the mother colony, is of necessity to speak of Dr. Lang. It would, of course, require a very long treatise to delineate fully the character and work of the great Statesman, Philosopher, Author, and Minister.

Having, however, brought our references to Dr. Lang and the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales down to 1836, the period of the origin of Victoria, and soon after of Victorian Presbyterianism, we must now part company with our old Parent Colony, and with our illustrious ecclesiastical pioneer, at least to a great extent. In virtue of the intimate relations subsisting between the old colony and the young, and between the old and the young

Presbyterian Church, we cannot avoid the necessity of referring to both as the subject may require. Were we to enter into the details of the subsequent history of New South Wales Presbyterianism and Dr. Lang's experiences, it would involve us in tedious and unedifying descriptions, and would be foreign to the special business in hand. As a representative of Port Phillip Province in the Legislature at Sydney, we shall have still to do with him in connection with events which have a bearing on our own church. More especially we shall require to notice the effort he made to introduce into Victoria a Presbyterian Church based on the voluntary principle—free and unconnected with the State. Besides, some of the earliest ministers who settled in Port Phillip came from Sydney, and the circumstances under which they were induced to leave that part of the colony for this will require some notice.

The year 1836 has become memorable in the history of this part of Australia, as the period of what may properly be called its discovery. At a distance of 600 miles (less or more) from Sydney, the Port Phillip country was an unknown region, except to an insignificant few, till the year mentioned. Its first inhabitants were enterprising gentlemen from Tasmania. The names of the first settlers in the new land of promising fortune are Messrs. Henty, Batman, and Fawkner—the last especially identified with the site of Melbourne.

It is worthy of notice, in treating of the rise and progress of our branch of the church of Christ in this part of the land, that there had not been more than a very few huts erected, and not a dozen inhabitants, when a pioneer preacher of the gospel from Launceston visited the place, and conducted religious services among the handful of settlers who had arrived. This beginning of gospel ordinances, it is not less interesting to know, was of an undenominational character. The object in view, in this visit, was the preservation of the aborigines from the destruction that might ensue if they should, in ignorance and prejudice, or in fear and revenge, come into collision with the new and strange white settlers. His errand to the place had nothing to do with trade or settlement, but was purely that of a Christian philanthropist.

Mr. Henry Reed describes his visit, in his autobiography, in the following terms:—"About this time Port Phillip was discovered by Batman, and I went over to devise some means of preserving the natives from destruction. There were then but two or three huts in the place—Batman's, Fawkner's and, I think, another. I had a letter from Batman to his brother (who with Buckley and three Sydney natives occupied his hut) to afford me every assistance in his power in carrying out my object. I had prayers in the hut with these five men every day, read the Scriptures, and preached Christ to them; the Sydney natives understanding a little English. No doubt this was the first time the gospel was ever proclaimed in Victoria. The Yarra Yarra tribe corroboreed to me where the city of Melbourne now stands, and alone I accompanied them up the

river, and lived with them for a short time. Having thus gained all the information I required for carrying out the object contemplated, I returned to Launceston, the Lord having mercifully preserved me while living with them in the wilderness."

Population began rapidly to increase in consequence of the fame of the new and fertile territory that had been discovered. In the course of the year, while many were leaving Tasmania and choosing settlement in the place of latest attractions on the other side of the straits, among others, a minister of the Wesleyan persuasion made his appearance, and conducted religious services to some extent. Towards the end of the following year (1837) the Rev. James Clow arrived in Hobart, the chief town of Tasmania. He had been Presbyterian chaplain under the Hon. East India Company, but had resigned in infirm health on pension, with a view to settlement in one or other of these colonies. After residing a number of years in India it had become a prevailing notion that Government officials, on retiring from active duty, could not fix their permanent residence anywhere so safely for health, or so suitably as in or near the southern parts of Australia. No sooner had Mr. Clow landed at Hobart than he heard glowing accounts of the Port Phillip region, and witnessed no small excitement among all classes on the subject of the discovery. Seeing he was in search of a home, he judged it wise, before coming to a decision, to go personally to inspect the locality. The result of his visit was his decision to become a resident in the new country. He and his family, therefore, arrived on the 25th December, 1837, with a view to a permanent home in the new town, which had been surveyed, and partially sold in convenient building allotments in the preceding June.

As soon as Mr. Clow arrived in Melbourne he counted it at once a privilege and a duty to conduct religious service for the benefit of the young community. He had the honour of being the first to establish public worship, according to the Presbyterian order, in the infant town, which at an early part of the year had been officially designated Melbourne. And it may be affirmed that he was the first ordained minister of any denomination who began regular and continuous public religious service in this new district of the New South Wales colony. After labouring fifteen years in his spiritual vocation in Bombay, having retired with enfeebled bodily power, and being well advanced in years, he had no intention of undertaking regular ministerial work. Not only at the beginning of his colonial life, but throughout his whole career, extending over twenty years, till his death, he was most liberal and kind with his services, according to his ability.

Immediately on his arrival he undertook the conduct of public divine service. Efforts had been put forth by members of the Church of England and of the Presbyterian Church to erect a temporary place of worship. The Church of England had obtained a reserve for ecclesiastical purposes in William-street, Melbourne West, at the first land sale. The Presbyterians had not yet

secured one anywhere, and the second land sale had not occurred. It was mutually arranged that the first building erected for public worship in Melbourne should be placed on the site mentioned, and that it should be used by Church of England members at a different hour from that of the Presbyterian service. The Presbyterians had contributed a large share of the expense of the building, and the advantage was mutual, while the arrangement was friendly.

Very soon, however, the Bishop of Australia disallowed the brotherly compact, and claimed, as he legally could do, the exclusive possession and use of the erection for members of his own church. The Presbyterians lost no time in putting up another temporary erection in Collins-street, near William-street. This erection, too, was built on another's land, but with the distinct arrangement that, when the building was no longer wanted for church purposes, it should be paid for by the owner of the land at contract price. The erection was used for Sabbath services, for the Scriptural instruction of the young, and for a week-day school, the teacher receiving salary from Government.

About the time Mr. Clow arrived in Melbourne it happened that another Presbyterian minister had arrived in Sydney, from Scotland, in company with Dr. Lang, who returned after his fourth trip home—viz., the Rev. James Forbes, who, along with other Presbyterian ministers, reached Sydney on 3rd December, 1837. He was licensed to preach the gospel by a Presbytery in Aberdeenshire, and was ordained by the Presbytery of Glasgow on 29th June, 1837, with a view to his emigrating to Australia. As soon as the Presbytery of New South Wales met, after his arrival, it was agreed to indicate the district of Port Phillip as his sphere of settled labour. Mr. Forbes resolved on losing no time before entering on the important work which he had come to do.

Mr. Forbes reached Melbourne in January, 1838. He took up at once the work which Mr. Clow began. This was the most important centre of ministerial labour which he could adopt. Indeed, there was no choice; because population in this new district had not as yet had time to settle, except in small numbers, though there was every indication of a rapid increase. He officiated for some time in the building which was occupied jointly with the Episcopalians, till the month of April, when he received official notice to leave. Then he conducted service in the wooden erection, which was exclusively under Presbyterian control. After a short time it became apparent that the cause of Christ, under the ministry of the Rev. James Forbes, would be a success. It was soon resolved by the leading members of the infant congregation to take steps to have him duly settled according to Presbyterian rule. This was necessary for two reasons—*(a)* To form the tie between him and his congregation as the tie of pastor and people; *(b)* To secure for both the qualification necessary in order to become recipients of the Government endowments.

At a meeting of heads of families and adult members of the congregation, held on 22nd June, it was resolved to give a call

to Mr. Forbes to be their settled pastor. On 1st August the subscribers agreed on a constitution for the forming church, and appointed five trustees to arrange the temporal affairs. These were James Clow, Skene Craig, Peter Snodgrass, William Ryrie, and Thomas Napier. The Presbytery of New South Wales, on receipt of the call, agreed formally to ratify the union of the minister and his people, without the usual services at an ordination or induction, on account of the extreme distance of Melbourne from Sydney. The cause prospered wonderfully, so that, within the space of about a year, the temporary building was found to be too small. Steps had been taken at the earliest opportunity—at the second land sale—to secure a site from Government for a church and a school. The population was steadily, and at no slow pace, progressing. In November, 1838, the day-school was opened, and in six months there were eighty children. In 1839, therefore, it was judged expedient to proceed at once to build a commodious schoolroom for the education of children during the week, and for divine service on Sabbath.

The site obtained from Government was that of two acres in Collins-street east, at the corner of Russell-street. A large schoolroom was erected, and so rapid was the growth of the population, and the progress of the congregation, that within the period of about a year and a half it was found necessary to proceed with the erection of a church. Hence a place of worship was built on the corner portion of the site, at once substantial and handsome, considering that only about four years before the echo of white man's foot had never been heard. Solitude reigned, except when disturbed by the laugh of the kingfisher, the soft leap of the kangaroo, or the coo-ee of the blackfellow, and Melbourne was unknown. Now, however, Melbourne numbered about 4,000 immigrants, chiefly from Tasmania and the Sydney side, and all of them enterprising people, of every trade and profession. They have broken in upon the silence that once sat enthroned, and have converted that silence into a hive of skilled and intelligent industry.

The incapacity of the aboriginal has been exchanged for the transforming power of active Christian civilization. That structure which, at this stage, was being erected on the brow of the Eastern Hill, among the gum-trees, was an outward symbol of the sure prosperity that must attend every new community which has for its basis the doctrines and precepts of scriptural Christianity. The mother-church of Presbyterianism in this part of the colony stood erect on that eastern elevation, as if proud of her position of pre-eminence, and of her forward march in the list of denominations. It was not more than the shell of a church-edifice before the end of the year 1840, the walls not having been even plastered till some time after, but it was an object of admiration to all who believed in that righteousness which exalteth a nation.

On 22nd January, 1841, it was that the foundation-stone was laid, amid much mutual joy, psalm-singing, earnest prayer, hearty congratulation, and bright hope. There was no need to hang the

harp on the willow by the Yarra Yarra bank, or to refuse to sing the songs of Zion in this strange land. The worshippers were not exiles and captives, but free and hopeful citizens of the celestial metropolis, and yet self-confessed pilgrims and strangers—yes, even in the most fascinating earthly country that ever saw the sun. So far from being in bondage, they breathe the air of a freedom that is bought—bought by the blood of an infinite ransom, and transmitted through the suffering and death of martyred progenitors. In the course of the year, when the population of the whole province already exceeded 11,000, the building was sufficiently advanced to admit of occupation in a temporary fashion. The cost of the erection, so far, was about £2,500.

With all its interior roughness and want of finish, there cannot be a doubt that the people entered its courts with joy, beheld its unpolished walls with admiration, and offered a sincere tribute of adoration and praise to the covenant God of their fathers. The structure, outside and inside, might not be counted fit to receive a single approving smile from the highly tasteful and artistic worshippers of an 1888 Presbyterianism, yet that edifice of nearly fifty years' earlier time possessed such a charm of individuality—such a pre-eminent claim to pioneering superiority—that it can never admit the pretensions to higher renown of any ecclesiastical edifice of after times, no matter how expensively or artistically constructed. And now the congregation, only five years after the foundation of the colony, is so numerous that they can claim from the Government the highest amount as supplement ever granted to any minister towards stipend—£200 per annum—and, with the contributions from the people, the minister received an encouraging income, perhaps larger than any minister of any denomination in Australia. As a man of superior character and attainments, the workman was worthy of his hire. The Rev. Mr. Forbes' sound piety, evangelical teaching, and consistent work rendered his labours pre-eminently important. Viewing him as a pioneer, laying the foundations of a church which was destined to rise, it might be, to no small distinction in a new land of rich resources, it was of the highest consequence that the young life of the colony should be imbued with the pure spirit of the gospel of Christ.

During these five years of history of the rise and progress of the Port Phillip district of New South Wales, the people who were flocking into the country were diligently settling all over the land, mainly, however, at important points on the coast and along the line of the rivers flowing from east to west—viz., the Murray and Goulburn—and of those also flowing to the north and to the south from the great Dividing Range. With settlers from the neighbouring colonies, and from Great Britain and Ireland, the result was that the entire country was very quickly covered over with squatters and their flocks and herds, so that only a limited number were found establishing themselves in the townships which were laid out and proclaimed.

In 1837 there were land sales in Geelong as well as in Melbourne.

In order to account for the rapid increase in population, it may be noticed that the arrangement of the Imperial Government at first was, that the money realized from land sales should be devoted to the introduction of emigrants from the home country. These required to be the classes that were exemplary, and were suited to the requirements of a new colony. It was necessary in working out this scheme to guard against the rendering of assistance in undue proportion to the inhabitants of one part of the three kingdoms over another. Hence the principle, of aiding emigration in proportion to the population of each of the three kingdoms, was adopted. It was intended thereby that the different nationalities should sustain a ratio here similar to that existing at Home.

The town in course of formation next in importance to Melbourne for church planting in this new province of Port Phillip was Geelong. Situated most favourably on the coast, whether for pleasant residence or for successful business, the population could not fail to enlarge itself. Having a considerable number of Presbyterian inhabitants, Mr. Forbes had his attention drawn to their spiritual wants at an early period after his own settlement. Indeed, he did not finally decide on Melbourne as his field for cultivation till he first visited Geelong. Within about ten months of his own settlement he again visited that important centre, preached the gospel to a respectable congregation, and formed the Presbyterians into an associated body, with a view to their receiving in due time a full supply of gospel ordinances. Meanwhile, the best arrangements possible must be made, in order to their mutual instruction and edification. And for the purpose of securing the services of a duly qualified pastor Mr. Forbes communicated with the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland.

In accordance with this appeal there was sent out the Rev. Andrew Love, who had been ordained by the Presbytery of Hamilton, 9th September, 1839. In the good providence of God he, with his wife and family, reached Melbourne in safety on the 9th April, 1840. His first appearance in Geelong to proclaim the everlasting gospel was on the 12th April, 1840.

Previous to his arrival a site had been secured from Government on which to erect a place of worship and a manse. Immediately on his beginning his labours, after having been duly called and appointed, the people adopted measures for putting up a minister's residence. In a few months he and his family were in occupation. In the following year, 1841, the church, a substantial building, was erected, at a cost of £2,000, a result which may well excite astonishment, considering that the community was only four years old and the population a handful. What a spirit of sanctified ambition, zeal, and liberality led to these bright achievements in Melbourne and Geelong, at a time when the whole capital of the colonists might well be supposed to have been locked up in investments, and all energies absorbed with material pursuits. Truly, all the giants of Presbyterianism did not belong to ancient times.

The three ministers who had entered on the all-important work of laying the foundations of a great ecclesiastical structure—how great—time alone could disclose—were not simply men of character and principle, but preachers of sound evangelical truth, and possessed of such eminent talent, good sense, and discriminating judgment as to secure for themselves the respect and esteem, if not the reverence and love, of all classes. And it became evident that there were coadjutors among their congregations and throughout the community who were eminently Christian, both in sentiment and in action, who had not left behind them in the fatherland the spirit of their covenanting ancestors, and who prized the inheritance of a free gospel and an untrammelled pulpit as the richest possession of a new country.

The Colony was every day and month swelling into larger proportions, and the work of God did not stand still. The eyes of the watchmen on Zion's towers were on the outlook for "fresh fields and pastures new." Indeed, the bleating of the sheep awoke the attention of the shepherds. In consequence of the assisted emigration scheme of the Government there were sent out to this province a considerable number of colonizers from the Highlands of Scotland. Many of these were to be found in Melbourne and the neighbourhood, and they required the services of a minister who was acquainted with their language. A good agricultural district was opened up about Bulleen and about Campbellfield; and many farmers were settled down to cultivate the land in these localities. A large purchase of land had been made at the last-named place by Mr. Neil Campbell, from the Isle of Mull, and hence the name of the township. The Presbyterian population predominated in these localities, and soon they began to plead for settled ministers and the ordinances of the gospel. On the Western coast, too, especially at Portland, where the earliest settlement was effected, and at Belfast as well, a good nucleus of Presbyterians had taken up their abode. They required to have their spiritual wants considered without delay. Appeals were sent, therefore, to the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland for ministers to supply the crying necessities of these localities. In answer to these requests the committee in Edinburgh, in 1841, made three appointments of ministers to these new and rising townships. The petition was despatched in October, 1840; but in those days there was no appliance of steam as now—driving ships to and fro in less than six weeks each way with passengers and freight.

The third minister sent from Scotland was the Rev. Thomas Mowbray. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Hamilton on the 5th of August, 1841. He reached Melbourne in January, 1842, and officiated in the church in Collins-street east on the Sabbath following. He preached at various stations in the neighbourhood of the chief towns, and was cordially elected by the forming congregation at Campbellfield. He was duly settled here in the June following his arrival. The people were greatly pleased with his

services. He was a man of high scholarly attainments, took special interest in the cause of education, and was a preacher of superior ability. His useful and acceptable labours were very much confined to the district in which he was settled. By reason of infirm health, he was unable to undergo the fatigue of long excursions into the interior. But his labours were highly appreciated, and the school which he originated and superintended sustained a good reputation. For reasons based on his state of health, he left the district and the province, after more than two years' earnest and successful work, having been translated, on 18th December, 1844, to Sydney, to labour there in the ministry.

The Rev. Alexander Laurie, who was ordained by the Presbytery of Lanark on 29th June, 1841, arrived in February, 1842, and was duly settled in July following in Portland, 278 miles from Melbourne. In all settlements of this kind at or near the coast, it was indispensable that the minister should make it his business to visit the squatting stations in the back country, and to conduct religious service at these as often as possible. Nor was it sufficient to pay ministerial visits within moderate distances from his family residence. He was under the necessity of taking long excursions into the interior on horseback—teaching and ministering. Mr. Laurie was well qualified, in point of scholarship and preaching gifts, for eminent usefulness. He was the first minister to preach the gospel in the inland districts of the Grange, the Wannon, and the Glenelg. Among the many excursions he made was one to the coast town of Belfast, about 88 miles nearer Melbourne, and there did good and spirited work for the advancement of the cause of Christ. It was in 1843 when he visited this skeleton town, as it then was, and as all the towns at this period were. The houses were usually built of slabs, and covered with bark, with the chimney of clay or wood. Port Fairy, on which the town stood, was then a place for fishers, and a number of small farmers had their residence here.

Mr. Laurie, on his arrival, seemed to have resolved that his visit should be productive of good fruit. Accordingly he applied to one of the proprietors of the township-land, and obtained a site free of cost for a church and school. He called on the hut-owners, and by getting all hearts stirred, and all hands employed in gratuitous work, there was set up in quick time an improvised place for the worship of God. With slabs and saplings for walls, loam and clay for cement, and bark for thatch, the hands being many and the spirit willing, the erection was finished in a very few days. They had a mind to work at the building of God's house, and so the work prospered. The pulpit, the flooring, the seats, were of the same primitive character.

The word of God and the worship of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ were not affected by the simple and poor surroundings. The fretted vaults of the loftiest and most magnificent cathedral ever built would not contribute one item more effectually than that thatch-

ceiling of native gum-tree bark to send the savour of the religious service up to the courts of heaven for acceptance. The beginning of the cause was humble—very humble, some might deem—but not on that account less, rather all the more, honouring to God. On 15th August, 1843, Mr. Lauric was called to Port Fairy by 78 persons, and on 30th October following the Presbytery agreed to the translation. He seems, however, to have still retained some charge of Portland. He continued his labours till July, 1848.

The next accession to the ministry was the Rev. Peter Gunn, who had been ordained by the Presbytery of Caithness on 11th August, 1841. He arrived on 29th February, 1842. His appointment was specially to minister to the Gaelic-speaking people. Accordingly, on 7th June, he was duly appointed minister of a second congregation in Melbourne. Not finding the Highlanders settled together in such numbers as to admit of their conveniently uniting to form a congregation, and to call and support a minister in town, Mr. Gunn made his headquarters in Melbourne, and officiated among his kinsfolk as he could most suitably arrange. Many of them, too, were poor and unsettled, although some of them, by superior skill and thrift, succeeded even in accumulating wealth. On the 5th of December, 1843, he was "called," and his services were transferred to Unwin's Special Survey, or Bulleen. Being a man of vigorous physical constitution and a good horseman, he took long rides into the interior, preached the gospel wherever he could gather an audience, visited stations and huts, and did a great amount of evangelistic work. He also did good service in the interests of education. Wherever he found small forming townships in which an average attendance of twenty children could be secured, there he encouraged the erection of a school, assuring them that the teacher would be entitled to Government allowance as a supplement to school fees. In this way he furthered the cause of Christ and the education of the young all along the eastern route from the sea coast to the Murray, a distance of about 180 miles.

After a long experience of discursive work of this kind, extending over four years, he was at length called to the vacant charge at Campbellfield, and, on 4th August, 1845, he accepted the call and was duly appointed pastor. Having seen no likelihood that he would be successful in forming a congregation of Highlanders, he elected to be settled in the charge of a district having chiefly an English-speaking population. There he continued his labours through a lengthened career of service, witnessing during his life-work the most marvellous expansion of population, of wealth, and of national development that was, perhaps, ever seen in the history of colonization. He was called to his rest on 5th June, 1864.

The next place of importance that called earnestly for a supply of gospel services was Gippsland. During a period of five years after the opening up of the Port Phillip district, Gippsland, which was so named in honour of Sir George Gipps, Governor of New

South Wales, was an unknown territory. The discovery, which was made in 1840 by Angus M'Millan, created no small excitement. The new district was opened up in consequence of an exploring tour for the discovery of new land, which might be selected by squatters from the Sydney direction, who were possessed of super-abundant stock. The new country was in reality, from its proximity to Port Phillip, a great accession to the pastoral wealth and the importance of the province. There was an immediate rush of population after the glowing descriptions of the well-watered and productive grazing lands were made public. They were pourtrayed in such attractive colours, having every element of magnificence, beauty, and fertility—having mountain and plain, river and lake—that there was an eager rush of selectors to enter at once on occupation.

The attractions of the country for the Presbyterian ministry were not slight. With the great numbers of people who were flocking to the new supplement that was added to the extent of the province, they judged that no time should be lost in making a fresh appeal to the Colonial Committee for a minister to occupy the district. The Rev. James Forbes wrote, therefore, to Edinburgh in May, 1841 ; but the Church of Scotland at the time was agitated by keen controversy on important questions of policy, and the appeal was for a time overlooked or forgotten. The exciting times which passed over the Home-church for a number of years rendered it exceedingly difficult to get the claims of Australia for additional ministers seriously considered. Whatever might be the real hindrances, strange to say, it was thirteen years after the first appeal was sent before a minister was engaged and specially appointed to the Gippsland portion of the province.

The first minister in this district came from Sydney rather than Scotland, and was settled in South Gippsland. He was the Rev. Walter Robb, who was sent by Rev. Dr. Lang, in January, 1851. His ministerial charge extended virtually over the entire district, north and south. His labours were not continued beyond a few years.

CHAPTER II.

EFFECTS OF HOME-DISRUPTION ON COLONIAL CHURCH.—1842-1846.

Having related the most prominent occurrences in reference to the cause of Christ in connection with Presbyterian arrangements during the first five years of history from the discovery of Port Phillip, or, as it was called by Sir Thomas Mitchell, "Australia Felix," we now proceed to the second quinquennial period.

It was in 1832 that the first Presbytery was formed in Australia. The Rev. Dr. Lang had been the sole representative of the Presbyterian Church ministry in Australia from 1823 to 1831. In the year last mentioned he succeeded, through his own instrumentality, in bringing five ministers to the colony. Along with these, in the year after their arrival, the first Presbytery was duly constituted. This was done in accordance with a formal enactment of the Church of Scotland which was adopted in 1833, for the purpose of declaring the relations which she sustained to Presbyterian churches formed in the colonies. It was enacted that "it was proper and expedient for ordained ministers of the Church of Scotland connected with fixed congregations in any of the British colonies to form themselves, where circumstances permit, into presbyteries or synods, adhering to the standards of this church and maintaining her form of worship and government."

During the few years that followed, Dr. Lang, by unwearied perseverance, and with a large amount of personal sacrifice, was successful in bringing to the colony a large number of ministers. Previous to the discovery of Port Phillip he had made three voyages to and fro, and he set out on a fourth visit home the same year of the discovery, and was always either sending or bringing teachers and preachers. Within two years he introduced to the colony no fewer than nineteen ministers and advanced students. Hence the formation of a Presbytery, in 1832, under the name of "The Presbytery of New South Wales," was a matter of no difficulty, because then there were five ministers, and, had there been representative elders, there would have been ten members associated. How important the beginning of a church-government which should, in course of years, develop into a large and influential body of Presbyterians, swell into an Assembly, and even culminate in an imposing Federal Assembly!

The first Presbytery that was formed in the Port Phillip district was in June, 1842. The Melbourne Presbytery was ten years later in its formation than that of Sydney. But while this was so, it is to be remembered, at the same time, that this distant province of Port Phillip, not yet formed into a distinct colony, was, at the period mentioned, not more than six years old, and it was only four years

and a half before, that the two first Presbyterian ministers arrived. The Presbyterian cause was only about four years old when there were five ministers and as many or more congregations and preaching stations. The five ministers who constituted the first memorable presbytery of this new province were the following:—Rev. James Clow, Rev. James Forbes, Rev. Andrew Love, Rev. Thomas Mowbray, and Rev. Peter Gunn, together with Dr. David Patrick, representative elder from the Scots-Church Session.

At this early stage very few sessions were formed, hence the paucity of elders in attendance as members of the church courts. Previous to this year there were only two ministers with settled charges in the whole province, and they were members of the Presbytery of New South Wales, which met in Sydney, the centre of ecclesiastical authority about 600 miles distant. Their connection, of course, could be only nominal, but still the relations and interests of the ministers and congregations here were necessarily intertwined with those of the distant brethren. They were all still under the same civil jurisdiction, and enjoyed the privileges relating to Government grants for stipends, buildings, and teachers' salaries the same as the residents of Sydney and of the country nearer the capital.

No sooner was the first Presbytery of Port Phillip formed, in 1842, than the brethren set themselves earnestly to the task of supplying gospel ordinances to the population of the interior, and also of diffusing the benefits of education among the rising generation. Having effected distinct Presbyterial existence and government, they were free to prosecute their work, discharging all their peculiar functions independently, in a material sense, of distant authority, and with the advantages of united counsel and action. The whole country was mapped out into districts, and the brethren arranged to visit them according to the plan agreed upon. The visiting appears to have been thoroughly done, and a satisfactory report was afterwards given at a Presbytery meeting in the beginning of 1843. The great necessities of the bush in spiritual matters were clearly ascertained, and, without delay, communications were despatched to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh on the subject, pressing for a supply of additional ministers.

It seemed, however, to be still in vain to clamour for ministerial help. The all-absorbing question of non-intrusion, agitating the whole church at Home, appeared to produce a deaf ear to the Colonial wants. Portland, Belfast, and other places were in urgent need of a regular ministry, and it could not be obtained. The intelligence received of the proceedings of church courts, and of the vehement contests and strong feelings of contending parties at Home, not only rendered it impossible for the voice of this distant colony to be heard, but convinced the brethren here that a disruption of the church at Home was unavoidable.

The way had been opened up in Australia, as early as 1837, for the reception of ministers from the Synod of Ulster, in Ireland. In virtue of a correspondence between the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and Her Majesty's Secretary of State, it was

arranged that ministers and preachers of the Synod of Ulster, when arriving in the colony, might be received into connection with the presbyteries of the Colonial Church, provided they signed the Standards and came under the same engagements as ministers from the Scottish Establishment. None of these, however, reached this province till a considerable number of years after the arrangement referred to was made. Meanwhile, through the information received by slow degrees, respecting the result of the discussions at Home on the great patronage question, and all its attendant conflicts with the civil power, produced a most disturbing effect on the ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, including of course this new province.

The contests going on for long years circled round the point whether patronage was Scriptural—in other words, whether the church or the civil power had the supreme authority in the settlement of ministers in their charges. At length, towards the end of 1843, the astounding intelligence reached the colony that the disruption of the Church of Scotland had, in the month of May, become an accomplished fact.

The news was startling in the highest degree. No fewer than four hundred and seventy ministers, in one day, left their manses, glebes, and parish churches, with all the emoluments attached, and unitedly formed themselves into the Free Church of Scotland, altogether independent of State connection and control. Public enthusiasm rose to an extraordinary pitch. A subscription was at once raised to meet emergencies amounting to £366,719 14s. 3d. In 1845, £100,000 were collected for the erection of manses for the seceding ministers. In 1846, a college was founded and fully equipped for training students for the ministry; and, within a few years, there were 850 Free Church congregations in Scotland.

This mighty movement, constituting one of the greatest events, if not the greatest, in the history of the Church of Christ during the present century, produced, as might have been expected, a deep impression, and a disturbing effect on all the mission charges and Colonial churches in British settlements throughout the world. The disruption in the parent church produced disruptions everywhere among the offspring. The two contending parties at Home had their respective sympathizers, friends, and followers in all the Presbyterian congregations that had been formed throughout the wide British dominions. It chiefly concerns us to notice the effect which was produced on the Presbyterian Church in Australia, part of which belonged to this province of Port Phillip. This part was over five years old at the period of the great shock in Edinburgh, and was eagerly aspiring after a larger growth.

Before speaking of the effects of the ecclesiastical earthquake in Scotland on the small Presbyterian community in Port Phillip, at the extremity of the earth, it is indispensable that we take a survey of the state of matters in the Colonial Church.

It will be remembered that New South Wales was virtually

Australia at this stage and for a number of years after; that Port Phillip was an appendage of the old colony, and that the Presbytery of this province, formed in 1842, was in ecclesiastical connection with Sydney as their headquarters and as the source of influence and power. Important questions affecting the church in this dependency must, therefore, be discussed and settled in Sydney. Matters, however, have, ere this period was reached, become somewhat complicated. Hence the difficulties in the way of a calm and satisfactory adjustment of the important questions which were forced on the Colonial Church for consideration and decision by the disruption in Scotland.

The complications are necessarily mixed up with the name of the Rev. Dr. Lang. We must, therefore, give a sketch of the course of events after the formation of the first Australian Presbytery at Sydney, in 1832. It was in 1831 that Dr. Lang had succeeded in bringing five ministers to settle in the colony. In the year following, the brethren being appointed to settled spheres of labour, formed themselves, as they were competent to do, into a Presbytery. From 1823 to 1831 the progress of Presbyterianism in New South Wales had been slow. But it is to be recollected that from the peculiar constitution of the colony as a penal settlement, the state of society, and the semi-military character of the Government, were extremely unfavourable to the growth of a democratic Presbyterian body. The Church of England and the Church of Rome for a long time after the founding of the colony seem to have enjoyed a kind of prescriptive right to the undivided occupancy of the field. At all events, all the difficulties possible seem to have been put in the way of the new denomination obtaining a settled footing.

In proof of this, when Dr. Lang arrived and began to preach the gospel and found a Presbyterian Church, so many friends rallied around him that within six months subscriptions were given to the extent of £700, the names having all been put down within a few days, towards the erection of a church. It was proposed that the cost should not exceed £2,000. The leaders in the movement memorialized the Government for a grant from the Treasury towards the new edifice, such as had been done on behalf of the Church of England and the Roman Catholics. The answer was a decided refusal, and was couched even in undignified and disrespectful terms.

In 1835 there were only five ministers associated in Presbyterian relations; and, in order to the enjoyment of emoluments provided by Government for the supplementing of congregational stipends, their names as claimants were duly placed on the list of the civil establishment of the colony. The following are the names:—

1825—Rev. John M'Garvie, A.M., afterwards D.D., Portland Head.
1831—Rev. Henry Carmichael, afterwards D.D., Prof. Australian College.
„ Rev. John Anderson, Sydney—Launceston.
„ Rev. Thomas Thomson, Maitland—Bathurst.
„ Rev. John Cleland, Windsor.
„ Rev. William Pinkerton, Maitland.

Then, in 1836, the British Government, influenced by the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland, passed an Act, which had regard to Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales, adopting the principle, that "Contributions shall be supplied from the public revenue, in aid of public worship, in proportion to the voluntary exertions made by the members of certain religious communions—among which the Presbyterian Church is included—for the support of their respective ministers." Port Phillip Province, of course, came within the influence of this enactment. This law provided £100 as a minimum and £300 as a maximum supplement to the stipends of ministers. After Dr. Lang had made his fourth trip, in 1836, to the fatherland, salaries of ministers were in part secured by parliamentary action at Home, and were not dependent on the arbitrary spirit of the local Government. In this way one difficulty, at least, was removed out of the path of ministerial emigration. Whatever might be the reason, Dr. Lang's success was now greater than it ever had been in inducing ministers to become colonists. Accordingly, he secured no fewer than fifteen ministers and candidates for the ministry, making nineteen that he had brought out by his own personal exertions, and some of them at his own expense. When, in consequence of the Doctor's efforts at home, preachers of the gospel decided upon setting out for Australia, they applied to the Colonial Committee to be duly appointed to New South Wales. Upon thus being accepted, they were ordained by their respective presbyteries, and they were recommended to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who furnished them with letters of introduction to the Governor.

Among those who were introduced to the colony at this time there were a few, with whose names we have become familiar, in this now fifty-year-old part of what was formerly the province of Port Phillip. The Rev. James Allan arrived in May, 1837; the Rev. Irving Hetherington, in July; and the Rev. William Hamilton and Rev. John Tait in September of the same year. On the 3rd December Dr. Lang himself arrived, with eight ordained ministers and four probationers, who were afterwards ordained.

On his arrival, Dr. Lang found that an obnoxious Act of the Legislative Council, prompted by the action of his own ministerial brethren, had been passed on 9th September, to regulate the temporal affairs of Presbyterian churches. The Act was passed in haste, within a very short time of his arrival, and evidently to forestall his powers to prevent its passing into law. Its object was to deprive the Doctor of the influence which he had been in the habit of using with the Government in all money arrangements in connection with ministers and congregations. The new Act declared—"1. That no money will be issued by Government for the erection of churches and the maintenance of ministers without the sanction of the Presbytery. 2. That no minister shall receive his salary without a certificate from the Moderator, showing that he had rendered services for the salary claimed. 3. That the appointment of ministers in future will be through the recommendation of the

Presbytery. When a vacancy occurred, it must be reported to the Governor: then he would apply to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for a suitable minister." Dr. Lang was indignant at the want of gratitude and respect which the brethren had manifested towards him; their dishonourable conduct in stealing a march upon him in his absence; their making no proper provision for the management of church business; their putting into the hands of the Governor a duty which did not belong to him, and giving him an influence which might not be conducive to the interests of the church; and also their unfaithfulness in not exercising discipline on an offending brother.

The Doctor could not help coming to the conclusion that he was not likely to enjoy friendly relations with the Presbytery. Nevertheless he set about making the best arrangements possible in the meantime for the settlement of the newly-arrived ministers. A severe altercation, however, ensued on the point whether these ministers, who had all been ordained, should not at once be accorded a seat in the Presbytery, then be appointed to their respective charges, and be afterwards enrolled as members of the Presbytery. The brethren maintained that they could not sit in Presbytery except as ministers of fixed congregations. Dr. Lang held that their spheres of labour would be at such a distance from Sydney that it would be impossible to follow out all the usual requirements of the law in regard to calls, commissioners, and induction services. The Presbytery would not yield to these ministers having a seat among them as members till after they became connected, according to rule, with settled charges. The result was that, after a week's discussion over the point, Dr. Lang felt it his duty to abandon all hope of co-operation with the Presbytery, to retire, along with the brethren he had just brought out, and with them to form a new and distinct organization.

Accordingly they met and agreed to form themselves into a new body, under the designation of "The Synod of New South Wales." It had been Dr. Lang's intention, before his arrival, to reorganize the whole church, now that the members were so much increased, and to constitute a Synod and so many Presbyteries. But a new Legislative enactment would have been required, since the name "Presbytery of New South Wales" was the legally recognized designation. Now he falls back on his original purpose, only it is as a body distinct from the Presbytery. This division was most unfortunate for the peace and prosperity of the church. Those who should have been brethren acting in unity became rivals, and, instead of hearty co-operation, there was competition in the same narrow bounds. Localities requiring the services of only one minister would be furnished with two, and others in urgent need of one would obtain none at all.

Besides, great trouble accrued to the new Synod themselves from the position which they had assumed. The Government would not recognize their right to emoluments, because, according to the Act recently passed, they did not produce the Moderator's certificate.

They applied to the British Government by memorial, praying that the usual salary be paid to them. The Presbytery also memorialized the Government against recognition of the Synod. The Secretary of State did not presume to judge, but transmitted both documents to the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh.

An attempt was made, however, towards the end of 1838, on the part of the Presbytery, to bring about a union with the Synod. Wise counsels were given and taken. Negotiations were begun, articles of union were agreed to, and a proposal to unite was adopted. Unfortunately, very soon after this happy arrangement, the news arrived that the Colonial Committee had come to a decision, which was confirmed by the Commission of Assembly, that the Synod of New South Wales had no connection with the Church of Scotland, and this although the basis of the Synod was "Adherence to the standards of the Church of Scotland and an obligation to maintain her form of worship and government." The Synod were indignant, and agreed to commission Dr. Lang to repair to Great Britain to put matters right, both with the Secretary of State and with the Church of Scotland, and, through them, with the public. The Hon. Secretary of State, it was maintained, had no right to transmit their petition to a body that had no jurisdiction over them. And the Church of Scotland had no right of control over a body that was not represented in her Courts. Besides, it was contrary to her own Declaratory Act to interfere with Colonial churches, which she regarded as independent.

Dr. Lang, therefore, sailed for England in 1839, and pleaded the cause of the Synod, both before the Government and before a special committee appointed by the Commission of Assembly to confer with him. The result was successful in securing civil rights to the Synod, and even in their being extended to other religious denominations in the colony besides the three favoured ones. The special committee of the church agreed to declare that the Synod of Australia is the supreme legislative and judicial court for the Colonial Presbyterian Church, but would have the Synod to bind themselves to adhere to the doctrines of the Confession of Faith and the other standards and formularies of the Church of Scotland, and to administer discipline, when necessary, according to the laws of the Church. The report of the committee was adopted by the Commission in December, 1839, and by the Assembly in May, 1840. A pastoral letter was, at the same time, sent by the Commission to the Presbytery of New South Wales, urging the duty of union and faithfulness in the discharge of duty. The Doctor returned to the Colony, pledged to carry into effect the union that had been agreed upon. The union was accomplished, and a bill was passed in the Legislative Council, in September, 1840, to amend the Presbyterian Church Act, and to legalize the union.

The Synod of Australia, in connection with the Church of Scotland, was formed on the 3rd October, 1840. Soon after this Dr. Lang set out on a visit to the United States of America. His object was to inquire into the working of the system of supporting ministers

without a State-establishment, and without State-endowment. He was desirous, also, of information respecting the plans adopted in the formation and management of academies and colleges. His ultimate design, in the spirit of true philanthropy, was to lay the foundations of lasting prosperity for this young and expanding country of Australia, in the establishment of efficient religious and educational systems. Dr. Lang returned in 1841. He formally joined the Synod on the 11th March, and a mutual bond was entered into pledging friendship and hearty co-operation in the future, according to the laws of Christ and the rules of the church.

The Synod now numbered eighteen ministers, and at the annual meeting in October, 1841, Dr. Lang gave an account of what he had witnessed in America in regard to colleges for training students for the ministry, and strongly recommended the appointment of theological professors without delay, and the educating of young men of promise for the pulpit, so as to be independent of supplies from the far distant fatherland. Accordingly a committee was appointed to take steps for establishing a Theological Hall. Previous to this the Doctor had put forth great exertions in the interests of education, and had succeeded not only in originating a large number of schools, for the teaching of the ordinary branches of learning, but in establishing St. Andrew's Presbyterian College, in affiliation to the University. Dr. Lang was nominated convener of the Synod's committee for the steps necessary to be taken for training students of theology.

In order to carry into speedy accomplishment this all-important project, Dr. Lang at once left Sydney to advocate the scheme during a tour through the new and prosperous province of Port Phillip and also through Van Diemen's Land. So absorbed did he appear to be with his object that he fell into two glaring mistakes, which occasioned an immensity of trouble to himself, to his congregation, and to the whole church. He overlooked, in his haste, to call a meeting of the Committee and obtain their sanction for his action, and he failed to make provision for the supply of his own pulpit. Unfortunately for the Doctor, there were now, both in the congregation and in the Synod, those who were in a highly sensitive state of feeling in regard to his bustling, unsettled, and erratic habits, and his pushing himself so much to the front in public matters. Moreover, when he observed something that was wrong and reprehensible in anyone in official life, no matter how high, he was fearless and independent in administering castigation. There were not a few, therefore, in the community, not simply outside the Presbyterian Church, but within her own pale, and even in his own congregation, who were strongly disposed to put the curb on his movements, and to tie him down to ordinary, moderate methods in Presbyterian life.

A favourable opportunity for the disaffected seemed to present itself in the culpable omissions with which the Doctor was chargeable in connection with his mission to Port Phillip; they must, therefore, bring him to book so soon as he returned from his tour.

Meanwhile his efforts in the cause of the theological seminary were crowned with success, and there was every prospect of his even obtaining various candidates for the ministry. The new institution, therefore, could be forthwith launched under favourable auspices. Behold, however, when he returned to Sydney, it was to encounter a storm of hostile attack on mere side-issues, of small consequence in comparison with the services he had rendered, and the exceedingly important work he had in hand. How sad that good and sensible men can be found to sacrifice great public interests affecting the church for the present and for all future time, rather than keep in subjection their own personal feeling, arising, it might be, from inconsiderateness, from jealousy, or from uncharitable judgment leading them to magnify a petty offence into a serious crime, where no offence was ever intended !

Instead of congratulations, therefore, Dr. Lang is obliged to hear complaints. Instead of honours heaped upon him for the enormous sacrifices he had made for the sake of the church and the colony, he is arraigned as an offender. He has done remarkable service, with the very best intentions towards themselves and towards the church, but they manifest a disposition to exaggerate his peccadilloes, which were not peccadilloes at all, but irregularities into which he fell in a fit of enthusiasm and zeal for advancing a good cause, and that cause affecting the vital interests of the church. But they seem to have been oblivious of obligations, and even to have adopted a system of dealing with him for his supposed offence which was unwarranted, humiliating, and irritating. The result was that the scheme for training candidates for the ministry was wrecked at its inception. The important services which he, doubtless, would have rendered to the church were lost. With a little kind and grateful consideration on the part of the brethren, with a little prudence and tact, not omitting faithful, but at the same time respectful, remonstrances, they might have reaped the most signal advantages from his learning and talents, from his courage and zeal, and put the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales on a permanently prosperous footing. But they lost all the good he was fitted to do, and the loss to the Presbyterian Church, to which he was devotedly attached, was irreparable.

He resigned his connection with the church altogether. The Presbytery cited him to appear before them on 2nd April, 1842, but he did not obey. The Commission suspended him at their meeting, 7th April, and instructed the Presbytery to proceed against him by libel, leaving the final decision to the Synod in October. The Synod took up the libel, accusing him of slander, schism, and contumacy. He declined their jurisdiction altogether, and would not stand at their bar. They pronounced the libel proven, and sentence of deposition was recorded. It was agreed at the same time to send official notice to the Presbytery of Irvine, Ayrshire, Scotland, where he had been ordained, and that Presbytery declared him to be no longer a minister of the Church of Scotland.

Matters, however, did not rest here. After his resignation he

continued to keep possession of the church property. A majority of his congregation adhered to him, as well as his elders and trustees. He then originated a new body of Presbyterians, agreeing to hold the standards of the Church of Scotland, but repudiating all connection with the State and all State-endowments. Availing himself of his knowledge of the working of voluntaryism in America, which he acquired on the occasion of his visit, he not only acted personally on the principle, but he organized a vigorous agitation against all indiscriminate endowments in the community, an agitation which never ceased till it culminated in their entire abolition in New South Wales in 1862.

To remedy the indignity, the injustice, and the grievous wrong to which he was subjected in being declared no longer a minister of the Church of Scotland, Dr. Lang repaired to North Britain, took legal action against the Presbytery of Irvine, and so successfully pleaded his cause before the General Assembly that they ordered the offending Presbytery to replace the name of Dr. Lang on the list of their members. The legal action subjected the members of the Presbytery to heavy expenses, and so, as an illustration of how "time brings about its revenges," after the cessation of State-aid in 1862, a union was actually celebrated between the four Presbyterian churches in existence in 1865. Dr. Lang and the Synod of New South Wales—as distinct from the Synod of Australia formed in 1840—with which he was connected, were included in the union. What effect the presence and influence of Dr. Lang would have produced on the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales in connection with disruption questions it is impossible to say. Certain it is, in the absence of his counsels, his clear perceptions, and his strongly-developed powers of argumentation, the Synod of Australia, under the shock of the disruption in Scotland, became shattered into fragments.

We could not expect to record many, if any, additions to the ministry in Australia from Scotland so long as the fierce contentions raging there about non-intrusion questions continued. The war of parties was waged keenly during the year of 1842, and matters are now approaching a definite issue. The great crisis is at hand, and, within another year, it will have come and gone.

The Presbytery of Melbourne, formed by a decree of the Synod of Australia, met for the first time on 7th June, 1842. The sederunt consisted of the Rev. James Forbes, Rev. Thomas Mowbray, and Rev. Peter Gunn; and Dr. David Patrick, elder. The brethren, when met in Christ's name to do His work in this new province, set themselves at once, not to theorize, not to discuss the probabilities of the contentions in Scotland, but to practise what appeared the most pressing duty. The education of the young and the establishment of schools was the subject earnestly considered. The members formed themselves into a committee in order "to investigate the actual extent of the means of education in Port Phillip, the proportion which they bear to the necessities of the population, to inquire into

the working of the past and present regulations of the Government relative to schools, and to report."

Again they met on the 6th September. It was reported that schools which had been established by Mr. Forbes in Melbourne were well attended and efficiently taught; also, that schools were connected with the congregations at Campbellfield, Geelong, and Portland. It was agreed to memorialize the Government, with a view to the teachers being better remunerated.

The Presbytery met next on the 11th November. The answer from the Government to the memorial anent teachers' salaries was unfavourable. It was arranged that the members of the Presbytery should undertake missionary excursions into the interior.

On the 4th March, 1843, Mr. Gunn reported that he had visited Kilmore, Seymour, Longwood, Benalla, Wangaratta, and Albury; that he preached the gospel and dispensed the ordinance of baptism at all these places; that he followed the course of the Murray for 100 miles, visiting and preaching; that his journey extended to eighteen days, and that he had ridden more than 600 miles.

Mr. Forbes reported that he had set out by Keilor Plains, visited Mr. James Robertson's station, then Mr. Mollison's, near Mount Macedon, next Mr. Hyde's station, and finally Mr. Campbell's, on the Loddon, preaching at all the places, and dispensing the ordinance of baptism where required.

Mr. Love reported that he had proceeded to the Moorabool and preached, then to the Leigh, next to Carngham and Buninyong, reaching as far as Mount Emu, and afterwards the other stations in the district, and especially the one at Lake Learmonth.

Mr. Laurie reported that he visited Heywood, and a large number of stations at Wando Vale, on the Wando River, and on the River Wannon, officiating at them all, and afterwards returned to Portland.

In the course of these and other visits paid at subsequent times, the ties of a common Presbyterian sympathy and interest were formed between ministers and people, and the foundations were doubtless laid for the planting of many churches and congregations in after years. All honour to the memories of these Presbyterian pioneers for their practical foresight and their earnest endeavours to lay the foundation well, so that the superstructure might be a stable one! There was also brought to light a large amount of practical piety among the settlers, which doubtless cheered the hearts of the earnest pastors. It was discovered that there was a deep interest everywhere felt in the stirring subject of the conflict in Scotland between the civil power and the church courts.

The sons of the covenant in these far-distant climes, even though much engaged in the pursuit of secular business, had not forgotten the struggles and sufferings, and even martyrdom, of their forefathers in the cause of civil and religious freedom; and still their hearts are powerfully stirred within them when they read of the most

brilliant intellectual powers being brought into electric play at Home, both in civil and ecclesiastical circles, in discussing points of law in the light at once of divine and human legislation. The interest felt in Australia, among reading and intelligent Presbyterians especially, was warm, intense, and widespread. At length the strain of eager anticipation is relaxed: the month of May reveals the deed done. The Disruption is a fact in history. The intelligence, by slow-sailing ships, reaches the colony towards the end of the year; and now questions of vital interest will doubtless agitate the Australian Presbyterian Synod.

From Melbourne comes the first sound of the tocsin of conflict which is to fall on the ears of the Synod in Sydney. The brethren on that side of the Colony are, no doubt, preparing for the onset. A contest and a division it is hardly possible to avoid. The two sections at Home behoved to have their sympathizers and friends respectively in this distant dependency. The Synod have just finished a fight with a giant force in the person of Dr. Lang, and have concluded that they have gained a victory—a victory which mayhap has proved worse than a defeat. Now they must enter on another, however reluctantly, among themselves, without the help of one who might have proved a master-pilot to guide the frail bark safe through the storm that is impending. The necessity of decision, and consequently of discussion, on the questions which have torn the church of their fathers into two parts, is forced upon them. Official communications have come from the two sections at Home into which the church has been split, both professing a deep interest in the prosperity of the Synod of Australia, and requesting to be informed of their views of the principles affecting the constitution of the Church of Scotland, as maintained by the State and as maintained by the church now called Free, and the course which they may find it their duty, in the circumstances, to pursue.

The Rev. James Forbes, at a meeting of the Melbourne Presbytery, in September, 1844, read an overture, which he wished the Presbytery to transmit to the Synod, about to meet next month in Sydney. The overture was duly presented and discussed in the Synod, and was, with one exception, adopted. It consisted of no fewer than nine clauses, and looked formidable in the reading. However, when summarized, it was found to embody these three points simply:—*(a)* A declaration of the Headship of Christ; *(b)* an assertion of the rights of the Christian people; and *(c)* the independence of the Synod. These principles could hardly fail to receive the assent of a Colonial Church which believed cordially in the first two, and was happy in having a connection with the State without any control or interference. And these were the very principles which emphatically distinguished the new Free Church. But while the Synod could consistently adopt these principles in the abstract, they were not, at the same time, disposed to let it be believed that all their sympathies were exclusively with the separated section of the Church of Scotland.

The crucial question still remained to be settled as to the nature

of the reply to be sent to the two sections of the Scottish Church. With which of the denominations should they declare their sympathy, and maintain their correspondence and fellowship? Would it be possible for them to maintain a neutral position and sustain friendly relations to both? Or must they break up the Synod of Australia into two parts corresponding to the two sections at Home? The problem was difficult of solution, and required superior wisdom and no ordinary measure of grace for the working out. There are now twenty-two ministers in the Synod, and where are the master-minds among them that can guide the bark, through the breakers ahead, safe to land?

It did not appear possible to maintain neutrality, how desirable soever it would be. The first attempt at settling the knotty question was in the direction of making friends of both parties and preserving unity among themselves. The effort was creditable, was conceived in a Christian spirit, and was ably expressed in six propositions. These set forth—*(a)* the desirableness of unity; *(b)* the absence of any obligation to adhere to one of the two bodies rather than the other; *(c)* the necessity of holding communion with both, as portions of the catholic Christian Church; *(d)* the thankful recognition of the kind offers from both to help the Synod in spiritual work; *(e)* the pledge of the Synod to put no minister under disadvantage who should, for conscience sake, denude himself of the right of presentation at any time to a parish church in Scotland by signifying his adherence to the Free Church; and *(f)* their designation as the Synod of Australia in connection with the Church of Scotland, not implying Erastianism in any degree, or any approbation of recent proceedings on the part of the Established Church.

Where there are many men there are many minds, and so there follows an amendment, which is very concise and clear, and which points in another direction. It was to the effect that—"In reference to the communications just read, it does not appear to this Synod necessary to alter the designation by which they have hitherto been known, or to abandon the connection they have held with the Established Church of Scotland."

A second amendment was moved, in direct opposition to the one proposed. The first amendment would bind the Synod to the Established Church, the second proposed to bind the Synod to the Free Church. It expressed "thankfulness that the Colonial Government had not interfered with their rights and liberties as a Christian church, but deep regret that the Established Church of Scotland had acquiesced in the interpretation of the standards by the civil power, whereby direct encroachment had been made on the Supreme Headship of Christ over His Church, as well as on the rights and privileges of her office-bearers and members, and also expressed deep thankfulness that so large a portion of the office-bearers and people of the Church of Scotland had renounced the civil privileges which the State bestowed, and separated themselves from a communion in which they could no longer govern the church according to the mind of Christ." This amendment further

stated that, "While the Synod has an independent position and jurisdiction, and while deeply grateful for valuable assistance and counsel in the past, yet they do not feel warranted in longer continuing the connection in which they have stood, but that immediate steps be taken to have the name legally changed."

On taking the vote the second amendment was carried by a large majority over the first, and the motion was carried by a majority of three over the second amendment. The decision, therefore, was in favour of neutrality, and of an attitude of friendly relations to both parties at Home.

We subjoin the names of the voters on the occasion, inasmuch as several of the names figured prominently in after years in church affairs in Port Phillip under its new name of Victoria. For the motion there voted—the Revs. Messrs. Hamilton, Eippers, Aitchison, Gilchrist, Fullerton, Adam, Mowbray, Hetherington, and Mr. John Stewart, elder. For the second amendment—Rev. Messrs. Tait, Forbes, M'Intyre, Blain, and Colin Stewart; and George Bowman, Esq., elder. Declined voting—Rev. Dr. M'Garvie, Rev. Messrs. M'Fie and Purves; and Mr. Anderson, elder.

In order to carry the resolution fully into effect, a committee was appointed to use means for getting the designation of "Synod of Australia in connection with the Church of Scotland" changed by Act of the Legislature into "General Synod of New South Wales."

When official intelligence of the Synod's decision reached the Colonial Committees of the two Assemblies in Edinburgh, in the beginning of 1845, they were found to be both alike disappointed. There were copies of the resolutions that had been adopted at the meeting of the Synod in October sent, of course, to the respective Moderators of the Established and Free churches. These would indicate the predominating desire of the Synod to maintain its own unity, and, at the same time, keep on friendly terms with both bodies. These resolutions entitled them to a kind reception, and to an enlightened and charitable construction. But feeling ran too high at the time to admit of unbiassed judgment. And so the decision fared not well when it came to be considered at the general Assemblies in May. The Established Church would not accept terms of friendship with brethren at the antipodes if they held friendly correspondence with brethren in Scotland who sought the overthrow of the Establishment. On the other hand, the Free Church Assembly would not hold amicable relations with a body in the Colony which sympathized with the Erastian Church of Scotland. Indeed, Free Church ministers heaped no small ridicule on the Colonial friends, who adopted such "milk-and-water resolutions," as they were called. The gist of the communications to the Colony from both assemblies was the same. They would have no compromise, no half-and-half measures. The New South Wales Church must be off or on. In other words, they must disrupt, if they cannot be of one mind, and show their colours before the world, choosing deliberately on which side the two parties would respectively stand.

Before replies were received from the Assemblies another meeting of the Synod was held in October. The subject of the Synod's relation to the Home Churches was, however, again taken up. Two motions were submitted for discussion—one, proposing to hold correspondence with both the Established and Free churches of Scotland; the other, to correspond with the Free Church alone. On the vote being taken, there were eight votes for corresponding with the Free Church alone, six for corresponding with both on equal terms, and eight declined to vote. These last seemed at a loss how to act till they should receive communications from Edinburgh on the subject of the Synod's decision in 1844.

At length the Synod of Australia met, in October, 1846, and had the deliverances of the two Assemblies on the subject of the Synod's resolutions put before them for discussion and final decision. The two deliverances were of similar import, requiring a clear and uncompromising decision as to the choice they made. The matters to be considered were narrowed down to a point, and much discussion was not required. Again there were three distinct propositions, as there had been at the previous two annual meetings. The questions simply were—adherence to the Established Church, adherence to the Free, or adherence to both alike. Under the scathing replies of both Assemblies to their former resolutions to remain neutral, the last of the three must now be set aside.

While there has been a substantially unanimous vote given in favour of all the principles which form the basis of the Free Church, and which prove a remarkable resemblance to, if not identity with, that church, yet there is a strong feeling of attachment by birth and training on the part of many to the national and historical Establishment; and, not having mingled personally in the debates on church questions, which had been carried on for years far away out of their sight and hearing, they did not experience that enthusiasm for the Free Church position which they might have felt if they had been living at Home.

The Established Assembly, too, had threatened them with total exclusion from the communion of the Church of Scotland, and from all the immunities and civil privileges which they might yet wish to enjoy in the event of their return to their fatherland, if they do not positively declare in favour of adherence to the Mother Church as established by law. At the same time, brethren of the Synod had no need to fear any loss or privation that could be inflicted on them in the colony, seeing they were an independent body, and, although holding a distinct relation to the Scottish Establishment by constitutional law, they were subject to no transmarine jurisdiction. Still they felt it to be perhaps to their advantage, for the sake of ministerial supplies from the Establishment, for the sake of continued sympathy and help from the same quarter, and for the sake of more hearty countenance from the Colonial Government, to remain as they were. So they judged it to be the best policy to continue in their old connection, and to abandon all further thought about a new "Temporalities Bill."

Hence the following motion was carried by a large majority:—"That it is not necessary to proceed further in the consideration of a change of designation, and the committee appointed thereanent are hereby released from their duties in that matter."

The positions of parties was now thoroughly changed, and the Synod was broken into fragments. Out of the twenty-two ministers in the Synod, there were sixteen who adhered to the Synod, as it had been, in connection with the Church of Scotland, and who in future must look for supply of ministers and preachers only from that quarter. They still professed to hold the distinctive principles on which the Free Church was founded. The civil power exercised no control on their church courts, and patronage was unknown. They continued, of course, to enjoy the emoluments provided for them by the State.

While there were sixteen who had decided on holding this position, there were four who deliberately resolved to renounce connection with the Synod, declare their adherence to the Free Church, abandon their emoluments, which they received as ministers in fellowship with the Church of Scotland by law established, form congregations in a new relation, look to the Free Church alone for ministerial supplies, and trust to voluntary contributions, and these only, for ministerial support. The names of these four were—Rev. John Tait, Rev. William M'Intyre, Rev. Colin Stewart, and Rev. James Forbes. The first three, leaving their protests behind them, retired from the Synod of Australia, and formed the Synod of Eastern Australia, on the principle of repudiating connection with the Established Church and holding correspondence only with the Free Church of Scotland.

The Rev. James Forbes, of Melbourne, not having been present at the meeting of Synod, sent his protest through the local Presbytery, and became the founder of the Free Church of the Port Phillip Province.

The Rev. Thomas Mowbray, who had left Campbellfield for Sydney, took the neutral side in the Synod, and consequently stood aloof from the other two sections. After continuing to preach for a while in Sydney, he removed again on the ground of health to Moreton Bay. There he acquired the honour of laying the foundation and becoming the pioneer of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland.

The Rev. William Hamilton resigned his charge at Goulburn, and his connection with the Synod of New South Wales. Along with his wife and family he left the eastern part of the colony, in order to settle, and find a sphere of ministerial labour, in the west—in Port Phillip, or Australia Felix. They reached Melbourne, after a journey of perhaps over 500 miles, in the beginning of 1847. After inquiry, Mr. Hamilton resolved on settling at Kilnoorat. There he laboured twelve years in the ministry, unconnected with any denomination, consistently with his action in the Synod of Australia. At length, in 1859, he joined the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, which he found to be based on the liberal principles and the neutral

ground which he and Mr. Mowbray had strenuously advocated in 1844–5–6. His labours in the interests of the cause of Christ in the district were blessed in a high degree. His energies were untiring in the good work. He was instrumental in forming most of the congregations in the large Mortlake Presbytery. His residence was latterly at Mortlake, where the Presbytery were in the habit of meeting, and on the occasion they always enjoyed his kind and generous hospitality.

These references to the keen debates and sensational occurrences which took place in the great metropolis of Presbyterianism in Scotland are necessarily meagre and shadowy. At the same time they are very suggestive. But it would have been foreign to our purpose to go into detail respecting the marvellous events which had transpired in the Fatherland, and produced such effects on the Presbyterian Church in this distant quarter of the world. Glancing at them at this distance of time and space, they read like romance, and seem to possess all the elements of interest which usually belong to a great battle-field. In Scotia hosts of contending forces were arrayed against each other, fighting for issues which involved the mighty destinies of the future, not only for time, but eternity. In the all-important struggles there were brought to light, in successive engagements, and in the ever shifting scenes of attack and defence, the exhibition of high-wrought intellectual gladiatorship — legal contests and conflicts with civil courts—bright flashes of moral courage and defiance of pains and penalties while following conscience—heroic braving of the thunder of interdicts of Law, and a spirit verging on the brink of martyrdom—enthusiastic eloquence of speeches, long lines of acute argumentation, learned lectures, impassioned addresses written and spoken without number.

The whole atmosphere of a kingdom seemed to be charged with spiritual electricity; thunder-clouds everywhere; loud cracks of air-explosions booming overhead and threatening disastrous results; giant institutions hoary with age, levelled, or threatened with being levelled, to the dust; great rents and fissures in the solid parts of the fabrics of antiquity; disruptions and rending asunder of the tender ties of social religious life; earthquake shocks which sent their vibrations to the ends of the earth and reverberated with the noise of fresh bursts of destructive power from the remotest bounds. These records we cannot reproduce here. We could only give them a passing glance, in order to show the effects which the stirring events of the ten years' conflict, culminating in the overwhelming upheaval of 1843, produced on Australian Presbyterianism. There can be no doubt that the hesitating policy pursued by the Synod of Australia, in their correspondence with the Assembly in Scotland, operated injuriously against the interests of the Colonial Church. There was one decision in 1844, another in 1845, and a third in 1846, all indicating a want of promptitude, resolution, and manly courage. The last decision, too, had such an air of cautious consideration, so different from the courageous self-denying spirit which had been displayed at Home in the cause

truth and conscience, that the reputation of the Presbyterian Church of Australia could not fail to suffer in public estimation everywhere, but more especially in the Colony.

The course pursued by the Free Church in Scotland was well known among the reading public—the general population of the Colony—and had a multitude of admirers. The contrast presented by the action of the great majority of the Synod, whose final decision looked so much in the direction of self interest that the community generally, and the intelligent Presbyterians specially, whose leanings were much in favour of the disruptionists at Home, would find it difficult to give the Synod of Australia credit for acting on high and enlightened principle. Charity doubtless could easily find grounds for lenient judgment, but the tendency of public criticism on ministerial character is to be censorious and severe. At all events, the cause of the Presbyterian Church did not for many years exhibit in the Eastern division of the Colony symptoms of a lively and progressive character. The decision arrived at substantially excluded the energetic help of the Free Church. The enthusiastic desire for expansion which characterized the new-born Denomination, sturdy, strong, and zealous from its birth, if the decision in the Australian Church had been in her favour, would in all likelihood have infused such spiritual life into the Colony as would have far more than compensated the brethren for their loss of Government-emolument.

The formation of the Synod of Eastern Australia, based exclusively on Free Church principles, it is true, kept open the door for the entrance of Free Church missionary enterprise. But the distracted condition of the Presbyterian Church in the Colony as it had been, and as it now was, presented anything but an inviting field for Free Church extension. Indeed the Free Church Assembly committed a great mistake when they ridiculed the milk-and-water resolutions of 1844. If, instead of this, they had displayed a judicious forethought, and presented kind and encouraging assurances of sympathy and of ministerial supplies, the result probably would have been different. As matters stood there were but few accessions to the ministry obtained from the two divisions in Scotland for a number of years.

It is not our province to speak further in detail of the Presbyterian Church in the Eastern district of Australia, in other words of New South Wales Colony. We now therefore proceed to trace the progress of the Church in this southern part of the Colony, viz., the new province of Port Phillip. Immediately after the decisive action of the Synod of Australia in October, 1846, the Melbourne Presbytery held a meeting. On the 17th November the brethren met, and matters required to be at once adjusted in reference to genuine membership. There were three of the ministers who adhered to the Synod of Australia in connection with the Church of Scotland. These were the Rev. Messrs. A. Love, P. Gunn, and A. Lauric. The Rev. James Forbes thoroughly sympathized with the

action of the Free Church of Scotland, and could not conscientiously remain in communion with the Scottish Establishment. He was not present at the recent meeting of Synod, and could not take part in the deliberations and the decision. Now, on the first opportunity after the Synod's meeting at Sydney, he stated to the Presbytery his dissatisfaction with their resolution, read a long protest in defence of his determination to withdraw from the Synod, and resigned his charge of the Collins-street congregation. His resignation was received with regret, and in virtue of his protest, he was at once declared to be no longer minister of the Scots-church, and no longer a member of the Melbourne Presbytery or of the Synod of Australia.

In consequence of the vacancy in Collins-street Church, the Presbytery took steps to give the congregation an opportunity in due course of calling a minister to occupy the pulpit. Accordingly the congregation met, as convened, in the Church, on the 16th February, 1847. The meeting was presided over according to appointment of Presbytery. The call issued in favour of the Rev. Irving Hetherington, of Singleton, Presbytery of Maitland, and Synod of Australia. The call was numerously signed, was transmitted to the Presbytery, and was duly presented to the minister-elect and accepted. In consequence of the great distance of Singleton from Port Phillip and other hindrances, Mr. Hetherington did not reach Melbourne with his family before the 28th May. By Presbyterial arrangement, the induction took place on the 13th June, 1847—the Rev. A. Love presiding and conducting the services.

It falls to be mentioned that an addition was made to the ministerial staff of the Presbytery this year, through the arrival of Mr. John Gow, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Glasgow, Established Church. A call was laid on the table in his favour from Presbyterian residents in Colac and Woady Yallock, about a hundred miles from Melbourne to the west. He underwent the usual trials and examinations before the Presbytery, and was ordained to the pastoral charge of that Western district on 3rd November, 1847. He was an able and acceptable preacher of the gospel, and laboured so faithfully and successfully as to lay the foundations of Presbyterian congregations in a considerable number of localities throughout the West. Among these may be mentioned Colac, Cressy, Rokeby, Scarsdale, Smythesdale. Mr. Gow was afterwards translated to the united charge of Smythesdale and Scarsdale. After an honourable career of service, Mr. Gow departed to his reward in 1866. The Presbytery of Ballaarat paid a high tribute to his memory.*

* To the last Mr. Gow prepared carefully for the pulpit, while by his kindliness, benevolence, and integrity he commended himself to the esteem of all around. The cry of distress was never unheard, and all that was calculated to promote the welfare of the district met with his earnest and liberal support. The Church of Smythesdale was built almost wholly at his own expense, and he was always ready to aid any object designed to promote religion, benevolence, or education. The Presbytery would testify to their esteem for their departed father, and their desire is that his modest and unobtrusive merits may not only be honoured, but that the visitation may stir us up to become more and more the followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promise.

CHAPTER III.

1847–1851.

THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA FELIX.

It is to be noticed that the pioneers of the Presbyterian Church in Australia all held communion with the Established Church of Scotland up till 1846. From this time forth till the union of 1859 in Victoria, and 1862 in New South Wales, the two divisions, formed at the disruption in 1843 in Scotland, came to be represented in Australia. And just about the same time that the Free Church started into existence in Port Phillip, the third large section of Presbyterians in Scotland, the United Presbyterian Church, holding the voluntary principle, came also into being as a Scottish party. The two last named representative sections received considerable additions to the ministry during the next five years of Port Phillip Presbyterian history. The section which represented the Established Church of Scotland, except the one case of Mr. Gow, had no additions to the ministry till after the gold discovery in 1851. And even then the additions received for a number of years were almost all from the Synod of Ulster.

Immediately after the decision of the Synod in October, and of the Presbytery of Melbourne in November, 1846, the Free Church began to make its appearance. The name of the Rev. James Forbes, who had been minister of the Scots-congregation, during a period of about eight years from the foundation of the Colony, stands forth in distinguished pre-eminence as the founder of the Free Church of Port Phillip, New South Wales. It could not be named Free Church of Victoria till 1851, when Port Phillip was separated from New South Wales, and erected into an independent colony, under the royal name. The name Australia Felix to a considerable extent obtained, as a general name of the province, but was chiefly given to its western portion. Mr. Forbes, having separated from his brethren by solemn protest, at once resolved on the formation of a Free Church. His purpose was, of course, to found the new Denomination, as nearly as possible, on the lines of the Church of the same name in Scotland.

A fundamental principle which he laid down was, that it should be wholly unconnected with the State, and should accept of neither land nor money from Government. The wisdom of laying down a hard and fast rule of this kind for the Colonial Church has been variously judged, according as men sympathized with the principle of establishments and endowments of Churches by the civil power, or sympathized with that of the purely voluntary support of religious ordinances by the Christian people. In the resolutions which he submitted to the Synod in 1844, at all events, there is no distinct avowal of his adoption of the voluntary principle, or of his even being in favour of the voluntary practice. His

resolutions were evidently carefully prepared, and all he stipulated for was the supremacy of Christ as King and Head of the Church, perfect freedom from all interference by the civil power with the Church-Courts in the settlement of ministers, and the rights of congregations to choose their own pastors.

It seems evident from his public utterances that he could, with perfect consistency, have carried into full accomplishment his plans as to forming a new religious organization on a Free Church basis, and yet could have consistently taken both land and money from the State. The gifts of Government in these cases were perfectly free of conditions. The recipients were hampered by no restrictions which would interfere with the spiritual rights and privileges, whether of ministers or of people. So be it, that the property was used for the purposes for which it was obtained, and ministers did their duty in spiritual matters, no questions were asked. No attempt was ever made on the part of the secular power to interfere either with doctrine, discipline, or government in the Church.

There cannot be a doubt that Mr. Forbes clearly understood the position on these points. Why, then, it may be asked, did he refuse the supplemental help of the State, both in the matter of sites, stipends, and buildings, which he could have received without any compromise? It could not be that the Government bounty was confined to the three originally favoured denominations, Church of England, Church of Rome, and Church of Scotland. The principle on which State-aid was distributed to Churches had been liberalized, and for a number of years embraced the Wesleyans, and there could be no question that Mr. Forbes, as minister of a Free Church congregation, had only to apply for a site and a money grant, and he would at once have got them. Why, then, did he virtually reject the aid so readily available, and so much wanted by an infant cause, especially as that aid could have been accepted without any offence to conscience?

The answer to this inquiry may be satisfactorily given, in all likelihood, by considering the peculiar circumstances of the time. These cannot be referred to without citing for testimony the name of the Rev. Dr. Lang. The Doctor had renounced all connection with the Synod of Australia, and all help from the State, in matters both of money and of land. His varied experiences had led him to a deliberate resolution to found a denomination in the Colony on a wide and comprehensive basis, the fundamental principle of which should be, no connection whatever with the State, and no State gifts or endowments. His visit to America, and the knowledge which he acquired as to the working of the voluntary principle, led him to admire the liberality displayed in the support of ordinances, in the building and endowing of colleges, and in providing efficient means for training a native ministry, all without the assistance of the public treasury. His many troubles and disappointments, too, in connection with his most earnest endeavours to advance the interests of a State-aided

Presbyterian Church, disposed him readily, in his comparatively isolated position in Sydney, to embrace the idea of a large church founded on American lines. Then the extraordinary conflicts sustained so many years with the civil law in Scotland, by the evangelical party, issuing in the great disruption of 1843, with the disastrous effects of the Scottish movements on the Colonial Church, roused all his energies into action for the purpose of carrying into accomplishment his latest experiment.

Accordingly, so soon as his scheme had been maturely conceived, he arranged for the supply of his pulpit, and set off for Port Phillip, to agitate publicly for the adoption of his views. He held a public meeting in the Independent Church, Collins-street, in March, 1845. The year after that witnessed the formation of the Free Church in the Colony, and found the Doctor in Melbourne, Geelong, &c., fully harnessed for the conflict with the principle of State-endowments to Churches. His great abilities as an orator, a statesman, a strenuous advocate of the rights of Port Phillip, a fearless denouncer of wrongs, and a faithful friend of the province both as its representative in the Legislative Council, and as a powerful pleader for the speedy separation and independence of the new and prosperous district in the South, on these accounts he was exceedingly popular amongst a large portion of the community.

Hence at the time the Free Church commenced her career in Melbourne, a voluntary Church became the popular cry. The press, to some extent at least, echoed the arguments and pleadings of the learned minister and statesman. The spirit of the community was, to a great extent, in favour of the new voluntary scheme projected, and enthusiastically advocated by the Doctor. Nor was it a mere fanciful theory that he put before the public mind. It was rather one that assumed the highly plausible aspect of extensive if not giant proportions. He would wield a rod, like that of Aaron, of such efficacy that it would swallow up all other rods. His plan involved another trip to the Fatherland. He would forthwith betake himself to Scotland, and put himself in friendly intercourse with the Free, the United Secession, and the Relief Churches, and arrange with them to send out a full supply of preachers and ministers, to pay £100 for outfit and passage to each, and to guarantee £100 per annum towards stipend for three years. Then they would build up, in course of time, a flourishing Colonial Church, which should be based on an American model, and should redound to the glory of the Divine Head, and the honour of the Free and un-Established Churches in Scotland and on the other side of the Atlantic. It goes without saying that the scheme in all its grand prospective features was not realized.

We have recalled the public advocacy in favour of voluntaryism of a highly popular lecturer, in order to show one at least of the probable reasons why Mr. Forbes repudiated all Government help in the founding of the new Australian Free Church. While he would not put himself under the guiding hand of the talented and popular Doctor, in matters of church formation and management, yet he

found a good argument in the indiscriminate endowment of truth and error. Indeed he would adopt the practical part of the Doctor's new prospectus. This is the main reason he gives for refusing State-aid, but he would accept both land and money for schools. He is willing to show his faith in his Divine Master providing for himself in such measure as might please Him, and helping him through the difficulties and troubles he might be called to endure in His service. Besides, he will manifest his thorough sympathy with his suffering and self-denying brethren at Home, by putting himself and his new congregation on the same footing precisely as the one on which they stand, declining all help from the civil power.

A considerable number of his old congregation have made up their minds to follow him, and give him all the sympathy and aid in their power in his new and trying relations. Among these were not a few who were both able and willing to render him substantial service in his efforts and responsibilities, and besides this class, there were many sympathizers throughout the colony who approved of his courage and decision, and who gave him large pecuniary support in his all-important undertaking. Accordingly, he commenced preaching to his new congregation in the Collins-street Public Hall, not far from his old church.

This beginning of the Free Church cause dates from the 22nd November, 1846.

Mr. Forbes held divine services here for a period of eighteen months. While this public service continued, means were used to select a suitable site in the town for a church and manse. A good site was purchased in Swanston-street, at the corner of Little Lonsdale-street, and the buildings were begun with all speed. The foundation stone of the new edifice was laid by the Rev. James Forbes himself, on the 17th November, 1847. The celebrated historical name of John Knox was chosen as the designation of the building, and it was opened for public worship about the middle of 1848.

Mr. Forbes continued to prosecute his pulpit and pastoral work with great ability, faithfulness, and acceptance till his death. He expended much energy in preparing a great variety of Church Acts, with a view to the guidance of ministers, Presbyteries, and Synods, in the management of ecclesiastical business, taking special care to have the new denomination on a practically voluntary foundation. Not only did he devote himself faithfully to pulpit work, private visitation, and all the ordinary duties devolving on the diligent pastor, he also called into requisition the press, in order to enlarge the sphere of his influence and usefulness. He started, therefore, and carried on as long as his health and strength permitted, *The Port Phillip Christian Herald.* His indefatigable and useful labours were not to be of long continuance. He was not possessed of a robust constitution, and his great anxiety, joined to exhausting work as a pioneer, were in all likelihood the occasion of a severe attack of illness some years before he died. At length, under the continued strain of physical and mental effort, he suc-

cumbed to the call of the Master to enter a higher sphere. Eight days before his departure, with the assistance of his father-in-law, the Rev. James Clow, he baptized his own infant child. It was the last official act of his ministerial life. Nature was so exhausted he could only speak in a whisper. This occurred on the 4th August, 1851. And in a spirit of holy triumph he departed to be with Christ, which was far better than toiling and suffering here. He breathed his last on the 12th August, deeply regretted.*

Next in order of time of the Free Church ministers who came to this part of the colony was the Rev. Thomas Hastie. He had been appointed by the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland to do ministerial work in Van Diemen's Land in 1842. Having laboured there about five years he received an invitation from a number of sheep farmers, chiefly about Buninyong, to come and settle among them. In obedience to this call he came to Port Phillip in 1847, and became a co-worker with Mr. Forbes in building up the Free Church. The territory which he occupied was wide enough to tax his energies to the utmost in his pioneering work as a gospel minister. He had the honour of building the two churches of Buninyong and the Leigh, occupying these centres—about 60 miles apart—on alternate Sabbaths, and conducting service at the settlers' stations in the evening. He has published a volume of sermons, which were favourably reviewed at the time. He still survives, and, with an assistant, is able to do some ministerial service.

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*Memorial Minute on the Death of the Rev. James Forbes.

Recognizing the afflicting hand of God in the removal from among them of one whom He had so eminently qualified for the work of the ministry, and where matured experience, sound judgment, and business talent rendered him peculiarly valuable in the present infant state of the Church, the Synod desire at the same time devoutly to acknowledge the great kindness of God in sparing him so long, and enabling him, notwithstanding his bodily weakness and the manifold discouragements and hindrances with which he had to struggle, to effect so much during the fourteen years he had been in the colony. They regard it as a special cause of thanksgiving that, though visited with a very threatening illness at the very time that the Colonial Church was at that crisis of affairs which issued in this disruption, his life was prolonged, and his health so far restored that he was able to take a leading and effective part in the deliberations and measures that then became necessary. . . . And the Synod record with deepest gratitude to their Divine Head the great success with which it pleased Him to crown the efforts of their lamented brother in organizing the church anew, first in connection with the elders and people, who united with him in protesting against the Synod of Australia, and separating from it with the other ministers, whom he was the chief means of bringing into the province; in erecting a church and school-rooms, in place of those which he had left, and in drawing up a code of excellent laws to guide the Church in her future progress. And the Synod desire to own the further mercy that has been mingled with this judgment in granting their beloved brother so much peace and consolation in the prospect of his dissolution, and in hearing of another labourer coming from the mother country to assist in supplying his place.

In the beginning of the same year, 1847, the Rev. John Zeigler Huie arrived from Scotland, to assume the pastorate of the Geelong congregation. He was a preacher of superior gifts, and he soon secured a large attendance. The congregation were accommodated in a temporary place of wership, but towards the end of the year the foundation of a new church was laid, and in the following year the building was finished. From the necessities of the case the building was occupied as a day-school. After prosecuting his labours for a few years with considerable success he returned to Scotland, on business which urgently required his appearance there.

These three brethren, with one elder, formed in June, 1847, the first Free Presbyterian Synod of Australia Felix. Their names were the following :—

James Forbes, Melbourne.
Thomas Hastie, Buninyong.
John Z. Huie, Geelong.
Henrie Bell, elder, Melbourne.

The ordinary meetings of Synod were held once a quarter.

The Rev. Jno. H. M'Lachlan came from Scotland to Melbourne in February, 1849. After occupying the vacant pulpit in Geelong for about a year, he received and accepted a call from Presbyterian settlers on the River Hopkins, in the Western District. He was duly appointed to that sphere, and had his settled residence near the township of Wickliffe. He held service at Wickliffe, Hopkin's Hill, and Dunkeld, and became the pioneer of the congregations formed at these places in after years. He still prosecutes mission work in the interior, on the borders of the Murray.

The Rev. John Tait, who had renounced connection with the Synod of Australia, and who assisted in forming the Synod of Eastern Australia, on Free Church principles, had been settled at Parramatta, New South Wales. On 2nd December, 1850, on a visit to Port Phillip, he was introduced to the Presbytery, and was invited to assist in their deliberations. The suggestion was made to him whether he could see it to be his duty to cast in his lot among them altogether, and assist in building up the infant cause in this new and important province. He received the suggestion favourably. On mature consideration of the matter, he resolved on demitting his charge, and leaving the Eastern for the Southern district of the colony. On the 5th March, 1851, he reported himself to the Presbytery at Melbourne, as having resigned his ministerial connection with the Synod of Eastern Australia, and having arrived with his family. On the 15th April, it was reported to the Presbytery that the Rev. Mr. Tait had been elected the evening before to the pastorate of the Geelong congregation. Mr. Tait accepted the call, and was inducted on the 16th.

Rev. Mr. Tait was privileged to take a prominent part in the

negotiations with a view to Union. Possessed of a calm, deliberative mind, of a clear understanding, and of a sound judgment, and having an extensive knowledge of church-laws, he was eminently fitted to render important service in the varied difficulties which beset the path leading to a United Church. He lent an effective hand in drawing up articles as a basis of Union. Some time before the Union his health began to give way. A trip home, partly to recruit his health and partly to do duty as a church delegate, did not secure any substantial restoration to his impaired energies, and at length within two years, after having participated in the triumphs of the Union here, he yielded to the call of the Master to come and serve Him in the Union Church above. His decease took place on the 19th March, 1861. From his eminent qualifications as a preacher, and as a man of active business habits, his connection with the other brethren brought a great accession of strength to the young Free Church Presbytery of Port Phillip. With his superior pulpit gifts, and his devotedness as a faithful pastor, he soon gathered around him a numerous, attached, and influential congregation.

The 26th May, 1851, witnessed the arrival of another Free Church licentiate, the Rev. John Hume. He was ordained on 12th June. He came to Melbourne opportunely, inasmuch as, immediately after ordination, he was appointed to officiate for three months to supply John Knox Church, the Rev. James Forbes having been laid aside by serious illness. Within the allotted three months, the pulpit of the Free Church, Swanston-street, became vacant through death. The Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland had appointed Mr. Hume to occupy Kilmore. He was settled there on the 8th October. Kilmore is a prettily situated town, occupying high ground in the midst of ranges of hills, and having large areas of superior agricultural soil in the neighbourhood. A considerable number of Presbyterians, from the Highlands of Scotland, had settled here on convenient agricultural allotments, and in the surrounding district there were a number of prosperous sheep-farmers, also of the Presbyterian persuasion. Mr. Hume laboured very successfully in his sphere, but his ministry was of short duration. In the midst of his faithful discharge of duties he was seized of a violent cold, which resisted all attempts to have it subdued, and ultimately cut him off in the prime of his years.

The 12th September, 1851, introduced the Rev. William Miller to the colony at Melbourne. It was exactly one month before he made his appearance that the esteemed minister of John Knox Church breathed his last. Mr. Miller had not landed many days till he had an opportunity of officiating in the vacant pulpit. His services were found so acceptable that no time was lost in taking the usual steps for presenting him with a call. He accepted the call, and was regularly inducted into the charge of the congregation on the 16th December, 1851.

Mr. Miller was a highly estimable man, was possessed of good abilities, and during a period of about ten years he continued to minister to a respectable congregation. He took an unfortunate stand in 1857 against the proposed Union of the different denominations. He was under the impression that Free Church principles were compromised in the basis, and, along with a few of his brethren, protested against the union, and positively refused to join. The whole question of dispute came before the Free Church Assemblies in Scotland, in 1860 and 1861. The subject was thoroughly discussed by the ablest men in the Church Assembly in Edinburgh, Mr. Miller being allowed to address the Court in his character, not as a delegate, but simply as an ordained minister of the Free Church. The result was a triumphant resolution, which crushed effectually all the contentions of the Free Church minority here, and stamped the general union with the strongest commendation of the Supreme Court at Home. Mr. Miller returned to the Colony only to tender soon after the resignation of his pastoral charge. Finding that his congregation were disposed to join the general body, he felt he could not consistently go along with them. His wife's poor health served also as a convenient reason for leaving. Therefore he judged it best to sever his connection, and return to Scotland. He left on 4th March, 1865. After labouring a few years in the ministry in England, he died at Callander, in Scotland.

Unfortunately for the John Knox congregation, they had just shortly before Mr. Miller's going as a deputy to the Assembly in Scotland incurred a very large pecuniary responsibility in connection with extensive alterations which had been effected on the Church property. For a good many years after they struggled courageously with their increased liabilities, and put forth strenuous efforts to gain the mastery. They were favoured, too, with the ministerial services of two excellent and devoted men in succession, one elderly, the other young. But whatever might be the cause, whether the position of the Church or the number of Presbyterian Churches that had been erected within easy distances of Melbourne to meet the wants of the increase of population, or the love of novelty prompting people to prefer a new cause to an old one, or the great load of debt crushing the energies of attached friends, and operating against the acquisition of fresh membership, or all these causes combined, the result was that the congregation collapsed. Even then vigorous efforts were made by liberal and considerate outside friends to preserve the property, and, if possible, resuscitate the cause, or, at the least, make it the centre of evangelistic work. It was strongly felt that it would be hardly short of a calamity to allow the oldest Free Church congregation to collapse—the first representative congregation in Victoria of the Free Church of Scotland—to become defunct. All good wishes, however, and earnest efforts, too, in this direction were fruitless, and at length John Knox Church and congregation are only names of the past.

The sympathizing friend, in passing by, can only drop a tear on the memorials of former life and work when the Colony was young.

It only remains that we mention Mr. D. M. Sinclair as the last accession to the ranks of the Free Church ministry up to the time of the gold-discovery. Mr. Sinclair was a licentiate of the Synod of Eastern Australia, and came from Sydney to Melbourne in September, 1851. He was ordained on 11th February, 1852, to minister to a congregation of Highlanders, who met in the Protestant Hall. At this time, however, all society was upheaved by the news of the gold. His congregation, although numerous, soon became thinned by the rush of people of all ranks and classes to the goldfields. His work, therefore, was greatly interrupted, especially as his congregation had been only newly organized, and was far from being consolidated when the gold agitation began.

These occurrences bring the history of this branch of the Presbyterian Church of Port Phillip province, or Australia Felix, down to the era of the gold. After this the province becomes known as Victoria. In 1851 separation from New South Wales was effected, and Port Phillip was declared an independent colony, bearing the royal name Victoria. Subsequently to this period, too, the Free Church in Scotland became thoroughly aroused to the duty of sending out regular ministerial supplies. The result has been that a succession of able and earnest men have arrived year after year and have most materially helped to secure a pretty full supply of gospel services to the Presbyterian population. The number sent exceeding those of the other sections of Presbyterians has imparted a decided complexion to the whole body, and especially through the general Union in 1859—made more complete in 1867 and 1870—has given a wonderful impulse to evangelical Christianity over the land.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PORT PHILLIP.

In recording the experiences of Presbyterianism in the new soil of Australia, how pleasant it would have been to set before the reader the picture of a United Church from the beginning of its history. Instead of this, we find that all the different sections of church organization at Home were reproduced with the early breath of public religious life. We have found the Church of Scotland to be the first in point of time to plant the banner of the gospel on the virgin soil of Australia. Considering the conflict and recent disruption of the old historical Church at Home, we could not wonder at the rise of the new rival, after it had been clearly demonstrated that the contending parties could no longer dwell under the same roof. Then it was equally to be expected, that the strong and vigorous offspring should soon find room for themselves to breathe, to grow, and to expand in this wide and free Australian land.

At a time, too, in the experience of the general community of Britain, when men's eyes were becoming open to see the brilliant attractions of the great world of colonization presented to view at the antipodes, it is no more than we might expect to see the third large section of Presbyterians springing up too side by side with the other two more imposing bodies in this sunny Southern clime. The United Presbyterians, therefore, come next in order as to time, struggling for a place and a name in the new Dominion that is to be.

The millennium was not to begin in Australia, in the matter either of political power, of personal piety, or of social triumphs in righteousness. Neither was the reign of perfect unity, peace, and love in the Church to begin with the opening up of new country for settlement, with the proclamations of liberty and self-government, and with the discovery of great mines of wealth. Each of the three denominations has its own distinctive peculiarities. The Church of Scotland holds by State recognition and State support, and, till recently, by patronage or the right of patrons, to present a minister to a parochial charge, independently of the will of the people. This right has been lately abolished. The Free Church holds, by the spiritual *independence* of the Church, the perfect supremacy of Christ in His own Kingdom, and the wrong-doing of the Civil Magistrate, when he would attempt to coerce conscience or interfere with the spiritual rights and privileges of the Christian people.

The United Presbyterian Church, composed by union, in May, 1847, of the United Secession and the Relief Churches, hold by the unscripturalness of patronage, by the perfect right of the congregation, to elect their own minister, and by the support of gospel ordinances, not by State endowments, but exclusively by the free-will offerings of the worshippers. It must be admitted that the points of distinction among the three large bodies do not present to appearance very formidable barriers to hinder cordial sympathy and co-operation, if not even of entire amalgamation. This statement will not appear too strong when it is remembered that the Standards of doctrine, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland are literally adopted by the other two denominations. The only exception made is that by the United Presbyterians, who simply guard themselves against agreeing to the Confession of Faith, teaching, or being supposed to teach, persecuting or intolerant principles.

In introducing this third Denomination of Presbyterians, while we may regret the threefold division in this part of the world, where there is no State-endowment of one church to the disparagement of another, it is nevertheless our duty to record the distinctions as they are found to exist.

It is to be noticed that this Denomination has something of a Colonial origin, apart from its identity with the section in Scotland of the same name. It may be truly said that the Rev. John Dunmore Lang, D.D., was not only the pioneer of the Presbyterian Church in Australia, he was likewise the first to hoist the banner

of voluntaryism in this new land. In 1842, it will be remembered, the Doctor separated from the Synod of Australia, and founded the Synod of New South Wales. The basis of his new denomination, while adopting the Standards of the Church of Scotland, repudiated all State support. This Synod was to be free and independent of the State.

In 1845, after earnestly advocating his new position on the Sydney side, and observing what he regarded as a phase of voluntaryism in the disruption of the Church of Scotland, the Doctor came to Melbourne, held a meeting in the Independent Church, Collins-street, and took steps to originate a Denomination in the Port Phillip district, founded on the voluntary principle. He advised that all who agreed with him should organize, and open correspondence with Scotland on the subject. A committee was appointed to take steps with a view to receiving ministers from the Free, the Secession, and the Relief Churches. When the last two were united in 1847, Dr. Lang appeared personally at the formation of the Union, and strenuously advocated his scheme. He had previously corresponded with these denominations, and proposed that they should send out ministers with a guaranteed assistance for a few years. None of these churches entered heartily into the scheme.

Hence there was no organization at Home, either for holding correspondence or for sending ministers and preachers with any pledge of assisted salary. Friends would only go the length of assisting by advice any minister, who should himself see it to be a duty to emigrate, each case, as to pecuniary aid, falling to be considered on its own merits. They would leave the ministers who chose to emigrate unfettered when they arrived, as to whether they should join the voluntary standard under a new name, or should remain attached to the Denomination to which they belonged at Home.

There can be no question that, in consequence of these efforts of Dr. Lang, writing, lecturing, and visiting both in the Colony and at Home, very many were favourably influenced towards the formation of a voluntary organization. His popular gifts and extraordinary zeal would always secure a large number of adherents to any feasible scheme, political or religious, which he undertook to advocate. Through his powerful pleading at Home, a number of ministers, preachers, and advanced students were induced to think seriously of their duty to go and seek a field of labour in Australia. Then through his visit to Melbourne in 1845, and the formation of a committee to organize a voluntary church, the way was pretty well prepared for the origination of a Presbyterian body which should be in full harmony with the Free and especially with the voluntary churches in Scotland.

The first minister who emigrated from Scotland holding the voluntary principle was the Rev. Andrew Mitchell Ramsay. He belonged to the Relief section, which merged in the United Presby-

terian Church. He was well indoctrinated in the views of his church, respecting the voluntary support of religious ordinances, independently of the special efforts of Dr. Lang to found a comprehensive Australian Church on the same lines. At the same time, it is reasonable to suppose that his coming into contact with the Doctor personally, and his perusal of his speeches and writings on the subject, had no small influence in confirming him in the Scriptural foundation of his opinions.

It is to be noted that the voluntary principle never entered into the basis of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and does not now. Indeed, there perhaps never was a period when there were not some ministers and members in this communion who believed in the lawfulness of Church-and-State connection, and of State-endowments. Mr. Ramsay, however, belonged to a church which was counted the strictest sect of the voluntary class. Previous to his resolution to venture himself and family into Australian life and work, he had laboured about thirteen years in charge of a congregation in Hawick, Roxburghshire, Scotland.

It was in 1846 that Mr. Ramsay embarked on the Clyde, on his way to the antipodes, and he arrived on the 4th January, 1847. He became practically the pioneer of voluntary Presbyterianism in Port Phillip Province. Although a firm believer in the soundness of his voluntary views, yet he was liberal and catholic in his principles. Accordingly, almost his first duties in public, after his arrival, were discharged in the vacant pulpit of the Scots-Church. He continued to officiate three months, pending the call and settlement of the Rev. I. Hetherington. He also preached on the occasion of the new minister's introduction to his congregation. There were the vacant charges at Warrnambool and Belfast, to which he could have received a cordial welcome, but the firm hold which he had of the voluntary principle seemed to point to the metropolis as his proper field. He had been heartily received by voluntary friends, previously organized in Melbourne, and he was persuaded that his duty lay in beginning a permanent cause in the chief city.

The Rev. Mr. Ramsay therefore commenced his public labours in one of the large halls in Melbourne. A very excellent congregation at once gathered round him. As soon as possible, measures were adopted for obtaining a site, and collecting money for erecting a place of worship. It was resolved at the outset that no application should be made to the Government for either land or money. All must be done by the free-will offerings of the people, and by these alone. A suitable site was obtained in Collins-street east, nearly opposite that on which the Scots-Church was built. In due tim a commodious and comfortable edifice for divine worship was completed, and was opened for public services on the 30th March, 1851.

Mr. Ramsay was possessed of popular gifts, good organizing talents, and a large amount of practical energy. In his Scottish sphere of labour, he took a lively interest in the evangelistic move-

ment which spread over many parts of the country, and penetrated very powerfully the Southern districts of Scotland. His public appearances at the time were attended by deep awakening and lasting impressions for good. There can be no doubt that his addresses, delivered with an enthusiastic earnestness, were the means of awakening many who were asleep, and bringing them to Christ and salvation. I refer to the great revival movement, which spread from the North of Ireland in 1839–40. During his labours in the Colony his warmest sympathies were all in favour of evangelical effort. But he found it impossible to devote the personal exertion to the cause of revivals which he had done at Home. His pioneering work was so distracting, exhausting, and complex, through the great rush of population consequent on the gold-discovery, that it was with the greatest difficulty he could command sufficient time for study and pulpit preparation. His disposition too was of the most friendly and sympathizing kind, so that he could never resist the calls for help in troubles of all kinds. He would in every case of need cheerfully render any service in his power, and in many instances to his own serious disadvantage. Amid many trials, toils, and struggles, he was at length laid prostrate in 1869, and breathed his last on the eve of the expiring year, having reached the goodly age of threescore.

The next minister who appeared on the scene, holding kindred views on the principle of State-support, was the Rev. Thomas Elliot Richardson. He came from Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) to Melbourne, on the 24th October, 1848. By arrangement he went to Portland, and established a cause, where the Rev. Mr. Laurie had previously laboured. Holding the voluntary principle strongly, Mr. Richardson did not, of course, occupy the place of worship which Mr. Laurie had erected. It was his resolution to establish a distinct cause, on free principles, which had taken a firm hold of the colony. Hence he built a new church on a site which was obtained as a gift. Besides his regular occupation of Portland for the benefit of the town congregation, Mr. Richardson made it a centre, from which he took excursions into the interior, evangelizing among the stations of the settlers, chiefly on the Wannon and the Glenelg. He was a man of some literary ability and enterprise. His labours in the ministry extended only till May, 1851, when he demitted his charge, and devoted himself to journalism. He started and maintained for a considerable time the *Portland Guardian*. The journal became a pronounced advocate of voluntaryism, and offered in some degree a decided opposition on this point to the leading daily press of Melbourne.

The Rev. Lachlan M'Gillivray arrived on 28th August, 1847. Being in sympathy with the brethren as to the relation of the civil magistrate to the Church of Christ, and having been ordained in January, 1848, Mr. M'Gillivray entered into cordial union with

these brethren. After deliberation and consultation, he entered, in June, 1849, on the pastoral charge of Warrnambool and Tower Hill, about 160 miles from Melbourne, on the West Coast. Being a man of superior attainments and influence, having had considerable experience in mission work, he soon gathered promising congregations at both places, and was so successful in calling forth the liberality of the people, that one place of worship was erected at Tower Hill, in 1850, of wood, and another at Warrnambool, in 1851, of stone. His labours extended over a wide district of country. Unfortunately for the interests of the Church and the district, he was under the necessity, in consequence of family considerations, to resign his charge, which he did in 1853, and returned to Scotland.

A fourth minister, the Rev. William Jarrett, came to Melbourne and joined himself to the voluntary Presbyterian cause. He had held a charge, as a Congregationalist, in Van Diemen's Land, but now resolved to cast in his lot with the Presbyterians. He was at one with them on the subject of Government-aid to the church. He commenced his labours in St. Patrick's Hall, in the western part of the city, in March, 1850. After preaching a short time here, he entered a new and substantial place of worship in Lonsdale-street, Melbourne, in May, 1851. He was a native of England, and it was presumed he might have operated on a considerable portion of the population without interfering materially with the other congregation's progress in Collins-street. He was a man of excellent scholastic attainments, but, although his discourses were of a superior character as to intellect and style, he always ministered to rather a small congregation. To the duties of a pastor, he added those of a teacher of youth in the higher branches of education. He was never able to sympathize thoroughly with Presbyterian forms and rules, and at length, in October, 1856, he resigned his connection with the Synod. He entered the general union in 1859. He became the first minister of Daylesford in 1862. He took an engagement as editor of the *Argus* for a short time, and soon after left the colony.

These four brethren, after prayerful consultation, agreed to unite and form themselves into the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of Port Phillip. This deed of agreement was entered into on the 22nd January, 1850.

In 1849 Mr. J. Allen arrived from Glasgow. He had ministered in the Seamen's Chapel in that city, and had applied for admission into the United Presbyterian Church there before leaving.

He was assisted in obtaining a site for a Presbyterian Church based on the voluntary principle. The site was obtained at the corner of Napier and Gertrude streets, Newtown, an immediate suburb of Melbourne. The name of the district became changed to that of Collingwood, and afterwards to that of Fitzroy. The foundation stone was laid by Rev. A. M. Ramsay, in December, 1849, and was declared to be based on the Standards, and holding the principles of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. He built a church

and dwelling-house. After holding the property independently for two years he sold it to the Presbyterians in the beginning of 1852. It was then held in trust for the United Presbyterian congregation to be formed.

Mr. Alexander M'Nicol, an advanced student and an experienced missionary from Glasgow, arrived in Melbourne 12th February, 1850. He was called to labour in the united districts of Bacchus Marsh and Mount Macedon, and he was ordained 18th June. Here he occupied an extensive district, requiring a great amount of severe and painful toil. At Mount Macedon, at Pentland Hills, at Melton, and various other localities, he sought to break the bread of life. He became the pioneer of a considerable number of churches that have since been formed in the surrounding districts.

He had his residence at Bacchus Marsh, and, as an illustration of how it fared with the ministers in the bush in the days of pioneering work, it may be mentioned that his manse was a "wattle and daub" hut, with earthen floor, huge chimney, bark roof, paling door, and cow-hide latch for lock and key. He preached here in a flour mill, and at Mount Macedon in a hotel. In travelling from the one preaching station to the other, or in journeying in any direction on duty, it could give no surprise to hear of his experiencing a tumble or a spill.

After occupying this sphere for a year or so, and finding the population small and scattered, he resolved on accepting a call, which he received 1st May, 1851, to settlement in Geelong. He laboured in this prettily situated and sedate town for a time with considerable encouragement and success. Efforts were soon put forth to have a place of worship erected worthy of the cause and the place. Previously they had been worshipping in a hall. A fine new brick building was being erected on a prominent site, and over £1,000 had been expended. While the roof was partially put on, a tremendous gale arose, and laid the whole in ruin. Under the terrible discouragements ensuing among the people, and the painful perplexity in his own mind, Mr. M'Nicol was led to the conclusion that it was his duty to resign his charge. The people acquiesced, and he was called to a settlement a second time in Bacchus Marsh, 6th February, 1856. Mount Macedon was not included.

It seemed as if Mr. M'Nicol were designated specially for a large amount of pioneering service. After labouring a considerable time at Bacchus Marsh, and doing much good pastoral and evangelizing work, he judged himself to be specially called to leave this district for another, which was more in need of his devoted labours. Having been loosed from this charge, he accepted a call, 18th July, 1859, signed by 518 persons, to labour at Rushworth, Whroo, and Murchison. A great many men had mustered at Rushworth for gold mining. He built large schoolrooms at Murchison and Rushworth, which served for Sabbath-worship. After cultivating this field for a time he removed to Donnybrook or Kalkallo, and Wallan Wallan, 10th June, 1861. He built a manse at Donnybrook, and got £500

of debt on the church paid off. He also built a church at Wallan Wallan.

Next he was called to Piggoreet, on 20th September, 1872. Along with this he took charge of stations at Cape Clear, Bull Dog, and the surrounding country.

Mr. M'Nicol was called to Bright on 31st May, 1876. He got a church erected in the township, and at the same time maintained services at Wandiligong, Eurobin, and Myrtleford, the latter over 20 miles from Bright.

He was lastly called to Moulamein, in the Murrumbidgee Presbytery, Riverina. The date of his call was 14th April, 1878. Although one of the very oldest townships in New South Wales, his was the first place of worship ever erected in Moulamein. After two years' occupation of this wide pastoral field, through the severity of the summer heat, and the infirmities of advancing years, he was under the necessity of retiring from the charge, and almost entirely from ministerial work. Repairing to the seaside at Dromana to recruit his health, he continued to do mission work for about twelve months, when he entered the list of retired pastors. The Assembly assigned him the honour of minister *emeritus*.

Mr. David Chapman, a licensed preacher of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, arrived 25th January, 1851. He was ordained 14th May, and duly set over the district of which Broadmeadows was the central point. This was an important agricultural district, where were a large number of well-to-do farmers. A church and manse were erected as soon as possible, and with all diligence and perseverance he continued at his post for many years, highly respected and esteemed. At length, through increasing years, the requirements of his family, and the discouraging falling off of population, he retired and took up his abode in the city. His retirement from public work dates from February, 1871.

Mr. Robert Buchanan Scott, another advanced student, arrived at Melbourne in February, 1851. Having prosecuted his studies, and passed the usual prescribed trials, he was ordained, with the view of his labouring among bush districts. After ordination, on 16th July, the Presbytery pointed out various needful localities. He visited Kinlochewe (Donnybrook) and Bacchus Marsh, and held divine service among the people. In like manner he visited the Mount Macedon district, and preached at Woodend, Kyneton, and Carlsruhe. After a considerable amount of pioneering and evangelistic work over an extensive circuit, he became settled at Carlsruhe, a farming district north of the Mount Macedon ranges. He remained faithful at his post till, through age and infirmity creeping on him, he retired in 1877, after a ministerial career of about six-and-twenty years.

Mr. David Hunter Ballantyne was the next to cast in his lot with the voluntary brethren. He arrived in the colony in March,

1850. He was an advanced student, and continued to prosecute his studies after arrival. He was ordained in the Collins-street Church, along with Mr. Chapman, 14th May, 1851, and was appointed to labour in the important town and district of Albury. This town was 190 miles north-east from Melbourne, and was the first halting place of importance after crossing the Murray on the land journey to Sydney. He prosecuted his labours in this wide and important field with much acceptance and success for many years among the townspeople, and over an extensive district of pastoral country.

At length, on 31st May, 1869, having received and accepted a call to Brighton and Cheltenham, he continued to labour with great acceptance till 1887. In consequence of infirmities, brought on by age and lengthened toil, he resigned his charge, and was relieved in December of that year. The Assembly constituted him minister *emeritus*.

The Rev. Andrew Ross followed in his colonial enterprise, and gave his allegiance to the thriving voluntary cause of Port Phillip. He arrived in January, 1851, and was appointed to the pastoral charge of the congregation at Portland, on 5th September following, Mr. Richardson having resigned. He was successful in maintaining a respectable and influential congregation. His talents and literary attainments were considerable. He was the author of a good-sized octavo volume previous to his arrival, the design of which was to illustrate the ancient manners of the Romans. His good gifts were well-fitted to secure for him a fair measure of ministerial success, and Portland, being a place in the early days of the colony to which emigrant vessels were frequently consigned, became the centre of bustle and business, and consequently of increasing population. After labouring for a few years, he became a great sufferer from ophthalmia. His labours were much interrupted, and being in danger of losing his sight, he at length resigned, and was loosed from his charge. This he did in 1856, and never afterwards was able to resume ministerial work. After a long course of indifferent health, and an experience of many trying changes, he died at a good old age, in Echuca, in April, 1883.

Another minister who remains to be mentioned here as having arrived from home and joined this section of the church is the Rev. William Baird Miller. He came from the North of Ireland, and was connected with a section of Presbyterians, who refused the *Regium Donum*. He came to Melbourne in September, 1851. The design at home, previous to his setting out for the colony, was that he should become the colleague of the Rev. Ralph Drummond, the pioneer United Presbyterian minister of Adelaide.

The next accession to the voluntary ranks was in the person of the Rev. Robert Hamilton. He had been about eleven years and a half in the Relief, and—after 1847—in the United Presbyterian Church, Waterbeck, Dumfries-shire, Scotland. He left

Liverpool in June, 1851, with his wife and small family, and reached Melbourne 12th September. The day became memorable, as the one on which the Rev. William Miller of the Free Church arrived in Port Phillip Bay. He was admitted into the fellowship of the Presbytery on 24th September. Immediately on arrival, the news of the gold discoveries fell upon his ears. Some report of the discovery had reached Melbourne from the interior, both in July and in August. Indeed, the year before a little gold had been found at Clunes, but this did not cause any stir. The chief opening of the golden treasure was on the 6th September. The inhabitants of the metropolis were for a week or two incredulous. But, after a very short time, doubt gave way to belief. The news of several large nuggets having been unearthed came to town, one 78 oz., another 58 oz. The excitement was extraordinary. It soon appeared that a social revolution was being realized, and that of a marvellous kind. It seemed as if some species of mental madness had seized the population. Gold looked like an invisible spectre, which had cast an intoxicating spell on all classes. Multitudes of every trade, rank and profession, not excepting the learned, found it impossible to prosecute calmly and contentedly their respective employments. The general cry was, "An outfit and a rush to the goldfield."

A Home Mission Board for church extension had been formed. They held consultation, and decided that Mr. Hamilton should be commissioned to preach the Gospel to the masses of men congregating at Ballaarat,* the principal goldfield.

He set out for the great centre of enchantment by way of Geelong. Here he hired a horse, one pound per day, to be returned

*I have retained the original spelling of the native name. Ballaarat was the name of the sheep-station on which the principal gold discovery was first made. The station was occupied at the time by Mr. Yule. His sheep-farm was very soon transformed into a gold-digging run. Living in a thoroughly primitive slab-hut, he had just got a new mansion raised a short way above the foundations, when operations were effectually arrested. Instead of ruin staring him in the face by the destruction of his occupation, he became suddenly enriched by the extraordinary prices he received for his flock.

The name Ballaarat affords a striking illustration of the fickleness which sometimes governs the public taste both in spelling and in pronunciation. The original pronunciation as given by the aborigines put the accent on the second syllable, and this spelling was adopted by all, and especially by Government officials, as if authoritatively to stamp it with permanence. The miners, however, in the matter of literary taste, as well as in other matters, were a law to themselves. Some rough and ready punster bethought himself of putting the accent emphatically on the last syllable. The pun became infectious, so that very quickly the third syllable became the universal favourite for receiving forcible attentions. By-and-by these attentions to the last syllable sounded rather offensive and vulgar. This feeling gradually led to making the first syllable the favourite one for emphasis, and this pronunciation seems to have established its supremacy by universal consent. It must be admitted, however, that the second change, while it is a decided improvement on the first, yet does not rectify the wrong done, and is not entitled to supersede the original euphonious pronunciation. Conceiving it to be possible that the second syllable may yet assert its primitive and rightful ascendency, I have adhered to the original.

in four days. The distance was about fifty-five miles, and required to be travelled on the Saturday. Having availed himself of the hospitality of a kind friend from Edinburgh, he remained all night in Buninyong, rode about seven miles into the great field of fascination next morning, and preached the gospel in the open air under showers of cold rain and sleet. Having finished his four weeks' mission he returned to Geelong, being obliged to walk on foot the whole way. On the journey he enjoyed the singular privilege of sleeping, or trying to sleep, under a tarpaulin during a night on the road. A kind bullock-driver provided the lodging.

Under the counsel of the Mission Committee in Melbourne, he prepared for a second mission to Forest Creek, known afterwards as Chewton and Castlemaine. Multitudes had forsaken Ballaarat and betaken themselves in a rush to the new field of discovery, believing there were at this place more alluring prospects.

After spending several weeks here, preaching the gospel twice each Sabbath, at localities about five miles apart, there was another great rush to a new field of charms at Bendigo (named afterwards Sandhurst), Eaglehawk, Golden Square, &c. The miners were rushing off in thousands, all, of course, or chiefly those who were not succeeding where they were, according to their wishes. It seemed impossible for a minister to find a sphere of useful and permanent labour amongst a population of such unsettled habits. After preaching there three Sabbaths, from the beginning of December, and occupying the intervening time riding along the Loddon, on a purchased horse, as far as Carisbrook, holding service at all the settlers' residences on the way, visiting shepherds' huts, distributing tracts everywhere, and in another direction travelling as far as Bullock Creek, where service was held and baptism was administered, then crossing on horseback the lofty ridges of Mt. Alexander, found himself very nearly lost in the bush, but providentially fell in with a track which brought him on to Sutton Grange, and the following day, having reached Stratford Lodge, the resting place, he resolved to return to Melbourne. This was safely accomplished, and the chief town of Victoria was reached about Christmas. It was not judged expedient by the Mission Committee to prosecute further in the meanwhile the Gospel Mission to the goldfields.

The United Presbyterian Church, then, had the honour of first sending a Presbyterian minister on a special mission to preach the gospel on the goldfields of Ballaarat and Forest Creek, first in October and November, and second in December, 1851, immediately consequent on the gold discovery. Inasmuch as the opening up of the gold mines has been an all-important era in the history of Victoria, and therefore in the history of the Presbyterian Church, it may be of consequence to put in the appendix an extended account of the mission, and of the effects produced on society, civil and religious, by the lever power of the shining mineral.*

* Appendix A.

CHAPTER IV.

ASTONISHING RESULTS OF GOLD DISCOVERY, 1851.

In entering on the next phase of Presbyterian history, beginning with 1852, we are necessarily arrested by the extraordinary crisis that had occurred in connection with the gold discovery. There had been very remarkable progress made by the colony in all material respects previous even to the suspected existence of a gold-field. The staple industry of the country had been showing a steady increase. Wool had become an export of such importance as to command the attention of the merchants, manufacturers, and statesmen of Great Britain. The sun of prosperity shone brightly on an enterprising, persevering, and industrious people. The number of the population was already considerable, amounting at the close of 1851 to nearly 100,000, all gathered within the space of fifteen years. Great as was this numerical increase, it was cast completely into the shade by that of succeeding years.

The next quinquennial period of progress was simply astounding. The population at the end of 1856 reached the amazing figure of 397,560. Within the short space of five years it multiplied itself fourfold. Considering all the circumstances, especially the remoteness of Australia from the old world, the increase was extraordinary. To account for so rapid a growth, there must have been an adequate cause, and that cause, with its results, must have had an important bearing on all Church-operations. Multitudes of new arrivals, of all classes, could not fail to affect the great questions respecting the mission of ministers of the gospel, the formation of Christian congregations, the collecting of money, the building of churches and manses, the institution of Sabbath-schools, and all the work of a living and active Christianity. The simple statement may here be made that, however powerful the attractions of gold might be which drew the crowds to Victoria, the interests of Church and school were by no means overlooked. In proof of this, while the fifteen years before the gold discovery gave birth to thirty-nine places of worship belonging to all denominations, the next five years brought into existence, in the midst of the feverish hunt for gold, an addition of 434 erections consecrated to divine service, or an average of 87 put up each year by all denominations.

There can be only one opinion that it was the opening of gold-fields that, in the dispensations of Divine Providence, brought such a marvellous rush of population to take possession of these lands. The unlocking of the golden treasure that had been hid for ages beneath the surface of the earth took place first in the Eastern part of Australia. A gentleman of the name of Edward Hammond Hargreaves, who had seen the Californian goldfields shortly before,

was struck with the similarity of the ground in an interior district of New South Wales. Having made search, he announced the discovery of gold, both on the hills and in the valleys. The announcement fell on the public ear on Tuesday, 6th May, 1851, and, as might be expected, with no small surprise. On Friday, the 9th, there were nine men on their way to the spot, which was euphoniously designated Ophir. Discoveries of other goldfields in various districts soon followed, and tens of thousands—yea, hundreds of thousands—of pounds' worth of gold, extracted from the earth within a few months, produced a startling effect on the minds of multitudes far and near. Search for the precious mineral was prompted in Victoria, and within a short time of the first discovery gold was found in various parts, but chiefly at Ballaarat, then at Forest Creek, immediately after at Bendigo, all before the year was ended. Within little more than the first three months of discovery, Victoria yielded £580,548 worth of the golden treasure.

The other colonies have all in their turn followed suit, and have shared in the benefits of similar discoveries, but none to the same extent as Victoria. During the thirty years prior to 1881, Victoria had produced from her mines over 202 million pounds in value. Queensland, from 1859 (the era of separation from New South Wales), had up to the same period raised over 34 millions; New South Wales produced nearly 13½ millions; South Australia over 404 thousand pounds' worth; Tasmania, nearly one million pounds; New Zealand, nearly 38½ million pounds.

The events occurring in rapid succession in connection with these discoveries produced the most profound impression on the minds of the public. The results at issue in the future, it was felt, no human intellect could conjecture. The wonder is that amid the whirlpool of excitement, through the astounding occurrences, there should have been ten places of worship erected during 1852 belonging to all denominations; in 1853, no fewer than 79; in 1854, 59; in 1855, 162, and in 1856, 124. It is pleasing thus to know that, when the gold fever was at its highest, there were multitudes of the people who were not neglecting their everlasting interests. Amid the most distracting and absorbing concerns of time, it would have been calamitous in the extreme had there not been many in a professedly Christian land who felt that it was the highest duty of man to make provision for the immortal part of his nature. The treasures of time pass away, but the wealth of the undying soul is eternal.

While the energies of tens of thousands were engaged in finding the gold that perisheth, there were in parallel lines tens of thousands, who, though diligent in their secular callings, were yet preparing for the future, and were laying up a spiritual heritage of privilege and blessing for their posterity. It was no more than might have been reasonably expected, that, in the first months and years of the exciting gold discoveries, vast multitudes should be excessively devoted to mining operations. But it would be an unwarranted

inference that thereby they were necessarily neglecting "the one thing needful." So far from this, it soon became apparent that mining must assume the character of a settled employment. It could not be doubted that mining would become, for many years at least, a stable industry. The enormous yield of gold from month to month, and even from year to year, seemed to warrant the expectation of towns and cities everywhere rising up, and all the institutions and privileges of civilized and Christian life coming into being, as the result of abundance of general wealth.

It is difficult to form an adequate conception of the rich returns which the miners had for their toil. It is easy to name them in figures, but not so easy to clearly comprehend them. We can form no proper idea of one million of anything. How, then, shall we comprehend the fact that the yield of gold in 1852 equalled in value close on £11,000,000 ; in 1853, £12,600,084? The average of the eight years ending 1861 was nearly £10,000,000. The average yield for the five years ending 31st December, 1866, was £6,281,832 per annum. The average for the five years ending 1871 was £5,586,414 per annum. Still further, the average of the five years ending 1876 was £4,591,396. The average of the five years ending 1881 was £3,225,474 ; and the average of the six years ending 1887 was £2,953,763. With such extraordinary yields persistently coming forth from year to year, how could the miners have any other notion than that the gold-digging industry should be a permanent one? Hence it came to pass that the miners themselves, at an early period in their experience, made arrangements for having established among them the regular observances of religious worship.

What has been the effect of the marvellous eruption of golden wealth on population and on provision for spiritual wants? It has been in the first instance, as we have seen, to increase the number of colonists fourfold within five years. And not only has this unparalleled result been accomplished in the initial period. During the ten years succeeding 1856, the number of inhabitants increased to 636,982; and in the ten years ending 1876 it amounted to 801,717 ; while in 1886 it reached about 1,000,000. The inflow of immigrants has not progressed since 1856 at the same marvellous rate as it had done during the five years preceding. Still the rate of advance has been at a very high measure of progress in comparison with the ordinary rate of colonization.

It may be noticed that there has been a steady decrease in the gold-production from the beginning, the highest yield having been in 1853. The wonder is that the golden store has not been long ago exhausted, rather than it should have undergone simply a diminution. Even the latest and lowest products must be allowed to be an astonishing out-put of wealth in one branch of industry, while the accumulated results, extending over thirty-seven years, is truly amazing. Besides, while the yield of the last few years indicates a decrease, yet there are fresh fields still opening up in various parts of Australia.

Independently of the decrease that has been experienced, there has been a steady advance in Victoria in all the elements of social prosperity. In regard to spiritul progress, it must be admitted that mining pursuits, with their risks and changes, their promises and failures, their gains and losses, their mental strain and worry, whether in hope or in despondency, are not in themselves favourable to an earnest attention to divine things. At the same time it must be recorded, as an encouraging fact, that steady progress on the part of the population at the mines has been made in providing and maintaining the forms of Christian worship. This speaks well for the Christianity of those who have been personally engaged in the direct pursuit of gold. They have been equally distinguished for their efforts to have as full a supply of gospel-ordinances as their fellow-colonists engaged in other pursuits, or living in places more or less remote from the fascinations and entanglements of the mining fields. All the gold-mining towns, cities, and districts are equally well supplied with the outward means of grace as the other centres of population in the community. The heathen idea expressed in the "*auri sacra fames*" does not find its counterpart among a people who are animated by Christian principles. It is to be remembered that it is not the gold alone that has attracted population to the Australian, more especially the Victorian, shores. Other industries have been all the while exerting a powerful influence, and have been absorbing skill and labour in the activities of life.

The agricultural interest may be specially mentioned on account of its numerical strength, the spiritual necessities of the rural population, and the difficulties experienced in supplying these necessities. It must be admitted that there is a very large number of people who have a strong thirst for the possession and cultivation of land. The earth-hunger is perhaps quite as powerful in many as the passion for obtaining the precious mineral at first hand. Multitudes therefore have invested enormous capital, in order to become first—and as extensively as possible—land-owners in the founding of this new dominion. These have become occupants of immense districts of country, partly, and in the first instance chiefly, by leasehold, and partly by right of purchase. They have gained possession of vast tracts of wild bush and dreary looking solitudes, not by the conquest of war, but by quiet and rightful means, and have called them "Peace." These land-princes and land-lords, occupying large portions of territory, with comparatively sparse population, rendered it necessary that the leaders in the Church should employ special instrumentality, in order to provide them with an adequate supply of gospel-ministrations.

Missionary-agency became essential. Not only so, but the agency employed required to be an educated one. The same qualifications in literature and theology were required for the bush which were essential in the towns and cities. In some respects well-educated and efficient ministers were even more necessary for the bush than the town. And in order to meet the requirements of the scat-

tered inhabitants, various places of worship were necessary in different localities to meet the necessities of all. It has been found necessary to have three, four, or even more, central places where public service should be held. For many years, till population increased, the settler's head-station was in most cases the only place where service could be held or where it was even required. The squatter's family and dependents were, as a general rule, the whole congregation. In the case, however, of various centres, all separated the one from the other by a considerable number of miles, an arrangement was indispensable by which ministrations should be conducted either on alternate Sabbaths, once every third, or even every fourth Lord's-day, as circumstances would admit. Work of this kind pre-supposed on the part of the officiating minister a good degree of skill in horsemanship, in riding or driving from place to place. The state of matters which was found to exist at the very commencement of the colony, requiring special ministerial agency for the country, has been more or less perpetuated.

The rural population has gone on increasing with the general growth of the colony. The sheep-runs, which were originally large and extensive, have been thoroughly curtailed. The lands which were let by Government on lease have been, under successive Land Acts, thrown open for public selection. The result has been that multitudes of small, or comparatively small proprietors, have settled on the soil—have spread population through the once uninhabited solitudes—have become permanent residents in comfortable freeholds—and have rendered it necessary that there should be a large increase to the instrumentalities of the gospel. In numbers of cases in which the sheep-farmers had not secured a large domain by purchase, the land-selection schemes brought them either to ruin or to extreme embarrassment. The results of the liberal Land Acts have been, on the one hand, that the Crown has absolutely parted with a great proportion of the public estate, and, on the other, that a considerable portion of country now presents the aspect of a great hive of rural settlement, industry, and prosperity.

To show the progress of agricultural settlement, the vast increase of the farming population, and the consequent extensive openings presented, always expanding, too, from time to time, for the planting of churches and the appointment of ministers, it is only necessary to give a few figures from the "Victorian Year Book." From 1836 to 1846 the area brought under cultivation rose from nothing to 25,134 acres. From 1846 to 1856 the land cultivated rose to 115,135 acres. From 1856 to 1866 the increase was to 530,196 acres. From 1866 to 1876 there was an increase rising to 1,126,831 acres. Finally, from 1876 to 1887, the increase reached to 2,576,405 acres. The value of agricultural produce in 1887 was £7,260,735 ; of pastoral produce, £8,911,336 ; and of mining, £2,839,120.

Wonderful, however, though the progress of agricultural settlement has been—marvellous though the wool-growing interest has been—astonishing though the advancement of trade and manufac-

ture has been, there can be no question that the colony has been more indebted for its extraordinary growth to the gold than to all other causes combined. What has been affirmed of California is equally true of Victoria, that "It is to the discovery of gold in unusual quantities that we owe the brilliant, almost the meteoric, flight of our State into our present advanced condition." During thirty-five years, from the original discovery, the Colony was enriched by the production of the pure mineral alone to the inconceivable extent of £215,000,000. And although there has been a gradual and very marked decrease from the first few years in the annual yield, yet there is no evidence of the mineral resources of Victoria becoming exhausted. The extraordinary thing is, not that the minimum yield has become so small, but that the maximum was so vast, and that the minimum should, after a thorough search of over six-and-thirty years, continue so large, and even furnish hope of increase. The Colonial mind has been so accustomed to be dazzled with vast and incomprehensible yields of mineral wealth that it ceases to see with any wonder yields that are still vast and far above clear conception. During the whole era of gold digging the public have become familiar with surprises from large finds of the glittering mineral. The period of nuggets may have passed. The time when men could pick up at their feet a lump of gold, as has been done in scores of instances, varying in value from £100 to about £9,000, and even £10,000, like the "Welcome" and the "Welcome Stranger," may not again return. Yet, with three millions of square miles of territory to explore, with a living staff of 38,000 skilled miners at present employed in practical search, who will presume to limit the possibilities of the future? In Queensland there is literally a mountain, to all appearance, of golden stone, which is now being quarried and crushed, and which yields immense returns of the precious mineral. Think of an amount of quartz ready for crushing which is confidently expected to yield one million of money!

On every consideration the mineral resources of Australia are not likely to be exhausted for, it may be, hundreds of years. If so, population may be expected to continue for many generations to be powerfully attracted to these Southern climes. Judging from the past, there is, therefore, the prospect of an increasing number of flourishing communities, culminating in the course of years in a great Federal Dominion. Should the present Dispensation of things continue, and the present rate of increase of population still obtain, within the next fifty years there will doubtless be in Australia a nation of not a few millions of people. Who can conceive the influence which, it is hoped, the Australian Dominion to be shall exercise in spreading over the whole Eastern World, North and South, the blessings of enlightened Christian civilization?

What responsibilities does the prospect throw on the existing generation of the Christian people! More especially does it become the Presbyterian Church to consider what a potent force has been entrusted to her, for the good at once of the present and future

generations, in the glorious gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! And what a privilege it ought to be regarded to be called to take an active hand in spreading among the perishing heathen in the numerous islands of the Pacific, and on the vast continent of Asia, the knowledge that is fitted to enlighten, elevate, and bless them, not only for time, but for eternity.

It is the duty of the historian, however, to record the past rather than speculate on the future. Speculation at the same time is legitimate, when it has a substratum of fact on which to base a prospective theory. Having endeavoured to pourtray some of the surrounding circumstances at the beginning of a most eventful Colonial history, let us turn our attention more in detail to the life and advancement of the Presbyterian Church. We have traced her changeful and chequered history from her rise in New South Wales down to the end of 1851. At this period the gold fever had raged for about three months—indeed, had just begun to rage. We must now consider the wrestlings and strugglings of our Zion for onward movement in the midst of an unprecedented rush of population.

The immigrants, arriving in thousands every week, soon found themselves in a state of bewilderment. The house-accommodation was enormous in price, provisions were almost at famine rates, and the diggings were 90 to 100 miles distant. A tent-town required to be improvised near Melbourne, and the energies of the few ministers in town were taxed to the utmost in relieving the distress of new arrivals. The effort to maintain the Church in undisturbed, successful, and peaceful progress was like doing earnest battle with the elements of a widespread storm. The conflict was a serious one for the minister of a city-charge. He dared not dream of joining in a rush to look after the spiritual interests of his people who had gone with the crowd. He must remain at his post till the conflicting elements should compose themselves. The scattering of the hearers was highly discouraging. It sometimes looked as if the place of worship would be altogether forsaken.

Matters at the worst, however, did not reach any dire extremity There were always the women and the children to occupy the pews and the Sabbath-school was not deserted. But, besides these, there were never wanting male members, who presented themselves as they were wont both in church and school. Some soon found it as profitable to remain in the city at their accustomed business, now quickened into a state of highly remunerative activity, as to repair to the goldfield. Others, who were enticed to try their fortune at the diggings, were not long in discovering that they were not equal to the physical exertion required and the hardships necessary to be borne. These soon returned to their business and their Church, their privileges and their duties in town. Some, again, did not find their expectations fulfilled in regard to gains and profits; and, considering the sacrifices they endured, they made their stay short. Another party, who succeeded up to and even beyond expectation, were not unmindful of the claims of the Church, and they prolonged their stay. And so with the increased production of wealth at the

mines, and the increased circulation of money in the town, the resources of the Church did not suffer so much as might have been expected. The expenses of living had enormously increased, the rents of houses rose to an extravagant pitch. It fared hard with a minister in town if he had no manse. Imagine a four-roomed brick house, with a detached kitchen and room, bringing a rent of £300 per annum. But with all the drawbacks, there is no evidence that any minister, though repudiating aid from the State, ever became insolvent. With the increase of population, the thriving occupations, the high rates of wages for work of all kinds, ministers were not left so badly supported as one might have supposed. And then, after a few years, the excitement subsided, business flowed smoothly in its accustomed channels, mining became a settled employment, and all social relations were maintained in the accustomed order of civilized and Christian life.

As an illustration of the interest felt by the miners in their spiritual welfare, it may be mentioned that within about two years after the opening of the goldfields at Bendigo a Presbyterian Association was formed for the purpose of securing a supply of gospel-ministrations. In the beginning of 1854 they entered into correspondence with the Melbourne Presbytery of the Free Church in order to secure the services of a minister. If they could not obtain a settled preacher they would be glad of a supply of ordinances as often as possible. Rev. Archibald Simpson (recently arrived) went on a visit in answer to the earnest appeal. The result of the services which he conducted was that a call soon issued on his behalf signed by 140 persons. The Presbytery, after hearing an interesting report from Mr. Simpson, and duly deliberating on the matter, agreed to express their deep smypathy with the friends at Bendigo, but finding that there were many difficulties in the way of a minister's immediate settlement, resolved to seek more definite information relative to these difficulties.

The Association replied, expressing their disappointment and regret at the delay in obtaining the services of a minister, and craving the Presbytery to render all possible assistance to the cause at Bendigo by sending a minister to that district from time to time, assuring the Presbytery that his comfort would be sedulously and liberally provided for.

These men were doubtless in earnest, in the midst of exciting pursuits, seeking the advancement of the soul's interests as of paramount importance.

CHAPTER V.

MELBOURNE PRESBYTERY—SYNOD OF AUSTRALIA—1852 TO 1859.

In reverting to the growth of the Presbyterian Church under the revolutionary period of the gold, we are under the necessity of prosecuting a threefold line of detail for a space of nearly seven years. We shall follow the order of time in which the three branches of Presbyterians sprang up in the Australian community, viz.—1. The Synod of Australia, afterwards the Synod of Victoria. 2. The Free Church. 3. The United Presbyterian.

In the end of 1851 we found the ministers in Victoria belonging to the Synod of Australia were five in number, viz.—the Rev. Messrs. Clow, Hetherington, Love, Laurie, and Gunn. Mr. Clow, the prime pioneer, being a member of Presbytery, but without a charge. Besides the ordained and settled ministers, there was Mr. William Smith, an advanced student from Aberdeen, who was licensed by the Melbourne Presbytery to preach the gospel on the 8th October, 1851. He was called by the Presbyterians of Heidelberg, Kangaroo Ground, and the Plenty District, and he accepted the call, but subsequently withdrew before ordination.

The next accession to the members of Presbytery was the Rev. John Reid. He presented himself soon after his arrival at a meeting of Presbytery held on the 7th April, 1852, and laid on the table an extract minute of 9th October, 1851, from the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland, certifying to his full standing as an ordained minister of the Establishment. Mr. Reid was a minister of some experience, having occupied various charges in Scotland, and even in England. He was a man of good parts. His gifts in the pulpit were very attractive. His oratory was of a superior order, and he was well qualified to take a prominent position in the Church.

After his reception into the Presbytery, he was at once appointed to do duty on the goldfields, at Forest Creek, Mount Alexander. He did not, however, fulfil the appointment. At a subsequent meeting he produced a medical certificate certifying that, through indisposition, he was prevented from undertaking the mission, and was not in a fit state to attempt its prosecution.

At the same meeting, 7th July, the Rev. James Clow, with a number of gentlemen, appeared and presented a petition, signed by 191 persons, praying the Presbytery to appoint the Rev. John Reid to undertake the formation of a second congregation in Melbourne. The petition was sustained as a regular call. Mr. Reid accepted, signed the formula, and received the right hand of fellowship. The Rev. P. Gunn was appointed to open the Temperance Hall as a

temporary place of worship for the forming congregation. Efforts were made to obtain from Government a site on which to erect the second church. The site in Queen-street was secured. No steps were taken at once to commence building. Contrary to expectation, Mr. Reid's relations in the city were not extended. In March, 1853, a call was presented to Mr. Reid by the Presbyterians of Doutta Galla district, afterwards Essendon, to labour among them. On the 12th April, Mr. Reid accepted the call, and was loosed from the charge of the Queen-street congregation. Being resident in town with his family, and matters in the Doutta Galla parish not being in a forward state in regard to either Church or manse, the Presbytery appointed Mr. Reid to preach to the congregation meeting in the Temperance Hall every alternate Sabbath evening. After a short time he was able to remove to his new manse in the suburbs.

In October, 1854, the Presbytery appointed Mr. Reid to preach every alternate Sabbath to the Presbyterians in North Melbourne, afterwards named Hotham, in a temporary place of worship. The name of Hotham was subsequently dropped and the original name retained. By the end of 1855, the people took steps for obtaining the services of a stated minister. On the 5th March, 1856, a deputation from the North Melbourne congregation appeared at the Presbytery and presented a call to the Rev. John Reid. A fortnight after, he accepted the call and became the first settled Presbyterian minister in this part of the city. He prosecuted his labours here only a short time. He manifested considerable sympathy with the voluntary agitation that was being carried on for the total abolition of State-aid to religion. This he openly showed by his appearing on the platform at a public meeting, and pleading for abolition, on the ground of the indiscriminate endowment by the Colonial State of truth and error. At length, in the month of December, he resigned his connection with the Synod of Victoria. The Synod accepted his resignation. His name appears again in connection with the United Presbyterian Church.

The Rev. James Low appeared before the Presbytery, at the meeting held on the 7th of April, 1852, and presented an extract minute from the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland of date 9th October, 1851, certifying to his appointment as an ordained minister to do mission work in Victoria. Having been duly received, he was appointed to visit the districts of Mount Emu Creek, the Grampians, and Port Fairy, with a view to his settlement in the ministry. On 7th July, he reported his having fulfilled his commission. He officiated several Sabbaths in the vacant pulpit of Belfast, and the result was a call in his favour signed by twenty-five persons. He declined acceptance.

At the previous meeting in April, a communication had been received from the Colonial Secretary, announcing that "the sum of £230 had been voted by Government for the support of a Presbyterian minister at the goldfields." Mr. Reid's appointment having

lapsed, Mr. Low offered his services for the mission to the goldfield of Forest Creek, requesting that he be appointed in terms of the Governor's circular. His offer was accepted, and he repaired forthwith to Forest Creek as his sphere of duty. Here he continued at his post till, through the rise of the town of Castlemaine, he found it convenient to make the township the centre of operations. On 11th May, 1853, he received a call from the Presbyterians of Castlemaine. He accepted, and was duly settled. At the beginning of the year 1856, however, his Government salary as chaplain failed.

In consequence of the passing of the Act under the new Constitution by the Legislature in 1855, granting £50,000 for the support of religion, the Government at length withdrew the grants to the goldfields chaplains. The agents of the Church, therefore, at Castlemaine, Sandhurst, and Ballarat were deprived of their allowance. Mr. Low, however, put forth a claim for a share of the Presbyterian portion of the large Government endowment. The total sum at the disposal of the Synod of Victoria was £5,500, one half being available for stipends, and the other half for buildings. To be entitled to his share of the stipend portion, it was proper that Mr. Low should have a regular congregation. The forming town of Castlemaine afforded facility for gaining this end. At the same time, he would continue his labours among those who were prosecuting their work at the mines. Hence he found the need of a fellow-labourer to enable him to overtake the whole work. He applied for a preacher from the Presbytery, but no one was available. He then asked authority to apply to the Free Church for a minister. The request was granted, on the condition that the helper should be under the jurisdiction of the Synod of Victoria. Failing in getting an assistant, he continued to act exclusively as Presbyterian minister of Castlemaine.

On 28th July, 1852, the Rev. Thomas Heron, late minister of Dungiven, Ireland, applied for admission into the Synod. He presented a certificate from the Presbytery of Newtown-Limavady, of date 7th October ult. The Presbytery cordially received him, and it was arranged that he should officiate at Belfast for three months. He was appointed also to Colac, with a view to his settlement in the district. Difficulties occurred to prevent his fulfilment of the appointment, and, meanwhile, on the 11th May, a call was presented in his favour from the Presbyterians of Collingwood and Richmond district. The call was sustained and accepted. Mr. Heron conducted service in the school-room, Albert-street, East Melbourne, but without encouraging success. On the 5th July, 1854, he demitted his charge, and, at the same time, resigned his connection with the Presbyterian Church, intending to adopt another sphere of labour, viz., to join the Church of England. The Presbytery, for some reason, took a strong view of Mr. Heron's conduct in the case. The result was his connection ceased on 20th July.

On 6th October, 1852, application was made on behalf of Rev. Thomas Craig, late of Ballynury, Ireland, to be received into the ministry of the Church. The usual Presbyterial certificate and satisfactory testimonials were presented, on the strength of which he was cordially admitted into the membership of the Synod. After his arrival Mr. Craig was sent to officiate in the vacant charge at Belfast. On the 20th October there was laid on the table of Presbytery, in favour of Mr. Craig, a call from Belfast, signed by 27 heads of families, and a list of adherents to the number of 210. The call having been sustained and accepted, and the formula signed, Mr. Craig took his seat as a member of Presbytery. In order to Mr. Craig's participation in the State-endowment, the list of adherents was transmitted to Government, and a claim was made for salary in terms of the Church Act. On 21st August, 1856, Mr. Craig was duly called to the pastorate of the Essendon congregation, and on the 20th November he was regularly inducted.

On the 17th January, 1853, Mr. David Boyd, from the Presbytery of Magherafelt, Ireland, was admitted as a preacher of the gospel, under the superintendence of the Presbytery, with a view to his ultimate settlement in the ministry. His certificate bore date 20th July, 1852. He was appointed to preach at Heidelberg, and to do service in the district. Soon after a call was the result. He signified his acceptance, and was subjected to trials for ordination. He was set apart to the pastorate of Heidelberg, Plenty River district, by ordination at Heidelberg on 2nd June.

The Rev. Samuel Corrie arrived 20th January, 1853. He appeared on 7th March before the Presbyterial Committee appointed to receive newly arrived ministers, and presented testimonials, as an ordained minister of the Irish Church, from the Presbytery of Ballyhay. Mr. Corrie was cordially received into Presbyterial fellowship. He was appointed to preach the next two Sabbaths at Prahran, St. Kilda, and Brighton. On the 6th April a call was presented from the united charge of the two former districts and accepted. He was duly appointed to enter forthwith on his work at a point in what was then called South Melbourne, convenient for both districts. He prosecuted his ministerial duties at the place afterwards known as Windsor, where a Government site was obtained, and a place of worship erected. He held office here till December, 1857. On the 18th November a call was laid on the table, on his behalf, from the united congregations of Kilnoorat and Darlington. At the following meeting of Presbytery, on 2nd December, the congregation of Prahran and St. Kilda having failed to appear by representation for their interest, he accepted the call and was loosed from his charge.

At a meeting of Presbytery, held on 11th May, 1853, it transpired that Rev. Peter M'Laggan, from Fort William, Scotland, had come to the colonies shortly before, had appeared before the Committee

for receiving newly arrived ministers, presented the usual certificates, was cordially admitted into Presbyterial standing, and was appointed to labour in the immediate vicinity of Melbourne. An urgent appeal, however, had come from Colac for ministerial supply, and the Moderator, seeing the emergency, had sent Mr. M'Laggan. The result was that a call from the Presbyterians of the Colac district was brought out in his favour, and was laid on the table. He then accepted, and his name was added to the roll.

Mr. M'Laggan continued at his post till 5th April, 1854, when the Presbytery were startled by a letter from him, in which he stated he had been under the necessity of leaving the Colony. The Presbytery regarded his letter as tantamount to a resignation of his charge, and declared the Colac pulpit vacant.

On 6th October, 1853, the Rev. A. Grahame and the Rev. T. M'Anlis, ordained ministers of the Presbyterian Church, Ireland, who had recently arrived, submitted their credentials from the Mission Board of the General Assembly, and were received into union. In answer to the earnest appeals of Presbyterians resident at Kalkallo, *alias* Donnybrook, and at Tarraville and Alberton, in Gippsland, the services of these brethren were soon utilized. Rev. A. Grahame was, on the 4th January, duly appointed minister at Kalkallo. Mr. Grahame prosecuted his work till 2nd December, 1857, when a call was laid on the table on his behalf from the Presbyterians of Longwood, Benalla, Violet Town, Euroa, and Mansfield. He was loosed from his charge, and declared minister of Longwood and the adjoining districts. Mr. Grahame was the pioneer minister of this important squatting district, although it had been previously well visited and even organized by Rev. P. Gunn. He continued to occupy this sphere till the close of his life.

The Rev. Thomas M'Anlis received and accepted a call from Tarraville and Alberton, Gippsland, on 4th January, 1854. Mr. M'Anlis was practically the pioneer minister of Gippsland. His labours here extended to July, 1857. At this time, he wrote a letter tendering to the Presbytery the resignation of his pastoral charge. The reasons which he assigned for the important step were three:—1. He had reason to believe his ministry was not appreciated, inasmuch as after he had been four and a half years in the district, the place of worship intended for him had not yet been raised above the foundation. 2. He was secluded from ministerial intercourse, and he suffered from depression of spirits. 3. The climate was cold and damp, and, being of a delicate constitution, he had suffered greatly from bad health. The result was, he was relieved from his charge, and, on the 19th August, he was called and appointed minister of Skipton. He laboured here with every prospect of happy and prosperous work, but only for a short time. On the 5th January, 1858, he went into the bush to bring in his two horses for service. He rode one and led the other, whose tether was tied round his body. The animals took fright and bolted. He was dragged a long way on the

ground, till he was fearfully bruised and mangled. He lingered till the 7th, when he expired, leaving a wife to mourn her sad loss. The deepest sympathy was excited on her behalf in the district, and a sum of £600 was collected as an expression of their kindly feeling.

Rev. John Martin arrived in 1853, and on 4th January, 1854, he appeared and submitted credentials from the Presbytery of Armagh, Ireland, and from the Mission Board of the Irish General Assembly. He was received into connection, and was appointed to be chaplain at the goldfield of Ballaarat under the Government regulations. It was the design of the Presbytery that he should form a regular congregation of worshippers, but after holding office three years and seven months he had not succeeded. A large site had been obtained from Government for a Church and manse, the population had marvellously increased, but he had not, to appearance, improved his advantages. On the 5th August, 1857, he gave an account of his labours since his appointment. At a meeting on the 19th August he tendered his resignation, and the Presbytery accepted.

The year 1853 was the most remarkable for Colonial advancement. The revenue increased enormously. The production of the goldfields seemed almost fabulous. The Government were animated by a spirit of corresponding liberality in the support of the various denominations.

On 7th March, 1853, a letter was read to the Melbourne Presbytery from the Secretary of the Colonial Government, calling attention to the "Public Worship Bill" that had been passed, securing £30,000 per annum, in the previous session, and requiring that, in terms of that Bill, application be made for stipend for the several ministers of the Presbytery. The Presbytery instructed the Moderator to apply for grants according to the following allocation :—Rev. I. Hetherington, as minister of Melbourne, £400 ; Rev. A. Love, £400 ; Rev. P. Gunn, £300 ; Rev. J. Gow, £200 ; Rev. T. Craig, £300 ; Rev. S. Corrie, £300 ; Rev. D. Boyd, £200 ; Rev. J. Reid, £300 ; Rev. J. Low, £300. The total sum claimed for stipends amounted to £2,700.

An equal amount was available for assisting in building Churches and manses. The portion of the £30,000 assigned to each Denomination was determined by the number of adherents, as indicated in the census. Those Churches which did not choose, from whatever reason, to accept the State provision, allowed their portions to lapse into the general revenue ; and the whole amount available being a fixed sum, it is evident that, as the ministers, churches, and manses grew in number, the recipients, individually, must obtain a diminished allowance in proportion to their numerical increase.

The liberality of the Government did not terminate here. On 12th April, 1853, a letter from the Colonial Secretary was read to the Presbytery, to the effect that the Government had voted £370 per annum for Presbyterian ministers attending gaols and penal establishments. The Presbytery appointed the following ministers

to the duty, and apportioned to them respectively the amounts attached :—Rev. I. Hetherington, Melbourne, £85 ; Rev. A. Love, Geelong, £50 ; Rev. P. Gunn, Pentridge, £85 ; Rev. S. Corrie, Hulks, £60 ; Rev. T. Craig, Belfast, £45 ; Rev. J. Low, Castlemaine, £45 ; the total, £370. These liberal grants were, of course, additional to the £230 per annum available for each Presbyterian minister employed at the three principal goldfields—Ballaarat, Forest Creek, and Bendigo.

In estimating the liberality of the Government, there is to be taken into account the allotments of land for Church, manse, and school purposes. Wherever it was proposed to have a minister settled, it was only necessary to make application and there the requisite site was obtained. These sites, through the great rise in the value of land, have in many instances become extremely valuable. The Government were so liberal in their arrangements that the Churches had the right to allow portions of their lands, which were not absolutely required for purposes of worship, to be let on building leases, for dwellings or for business. At an early period, a considerable amount of frontage in Russell and Little Collins streets, belonging to the Collins-street Church site, was let on building leases. These of late years have expired. The properties have become the unrestricted possession of the congregation, and the rents go to swell the yearly revenue. The school portion has not been required since the Denominational system has merged in the national. This also has been let on building lease, and yields a large rental, amounting to £800 a year. This amount requires to be still devoted to purposes of an educational character. With these adventitious advantages, the value of the entire property in Collins-street has been estimated at £200,000. The land, it is true, in this part of the metropolis is of exceptional value. In several instances, in 1887, frontages in the same street, further west, have been sold at over £1,565 per foot. It is to be noted, too, that, while in several other denominations in the city, Church-lands have been in portions let on building lease, it does not appear that, besides the one mentioned, there is any other Presbyterian congregation in the Body that has followed the example. There have been many cases in which, at the desire of the congregation and with the consent of the trustees of the General Assembly and of the Government, portions of Church-lands have been absolutely sold. The proceeds in such cases must necessarily be devoted to congregational or Assembly objects.

In the month of September, 1853, the attention of the Presbytery was called to the disadvantages which the Victorian Church sustained from their remaining in connection with the Synod of Australia, and acting under the jurisdiction of an authority so far distant as Sydney. The propriety of seeking separation without delay was urged. The Presbytery, by reason of distance from headquarters, were necessarily fettered in their action, and it was not reasonable that, while forming part of an independent Colony, they should still

owe an allegiance to the Synod in New South Wales. In order to the celebration of marriages, for example, application required to be made to the Moderator in the distant Colony to obtain from the Government authority to act on behalf of the ministers who had been settled in charges since 1st July, 1851. Correspondence, therefore, was entered into and maintained for a considerable time with the authorities in the Synod, with a view to ecclesiastical independence. The application was not favourably entertained, and it was known that opposition would be encountered. The Rev. P. Gunn was accordingly commissioned to repair to Sydney, and to plead the necessity of separation before the Synod. On the 15th February, 1854, Mr. Gunn reported to the Presbytery that his mission was crowned with success, and he produced an extract minute of Synod, authorizing the Melbourne Presbytery to assume the position of a separate Synod.

On the 19th April, 1854, the Presbytery accordingly met, and agreed to dissolve under the old *règime* and re-appear under the new, assuming the designation of the Synod of Victoria. The names of the members of Synod present were the following:—The Rev. Messrs. J. Clow, A. Love, P. Gunn, I. Hetherington, J. Reid, S. Corrie, T. Heron, D. Boyd, and A. Grahame, ministers, and Messrs. D. Kennedy and B. Barber, elders.

In entering on this new phase of a purely Presbyterian Church of Victoria, separate and independent, the members of Synod agreed to record—"Their continued and unaltered adherence to the Standards which they had hitherto maintained, viz.—The Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, the Directory for Public Worship, the Form of Presbyterian Church Government, and the Second Book of Discipline," and engaged that "these Standards should ever form the Standards of this Church." At the same time they resolved—"That the Synod should stand on a broad and comprehensive basis, not avowing an exclusive preference for any particular Church, avoiding everything that would be likely to hinder Presbyterians in general from uniting in one large and influential body, declaring their firm determination to maintain a separate, distinct, and independent position, and especially asserting their uncontrolled and perfect freedom in the management of all their spiritual and ecclesiastical concerns agreeably to the above Standards."

It was resolved that the Synod should be divided into two parts—the Presbytery of Melbourne and the Presbytery of Geelong. The Presbytery of Melbourne should comprehend the ministers and congregations of Melbourne, East Melbourne, South Melbourne, Doutta Galla, Campbellfield, Kalkallo, Heidelberg, Castlemaine, and Gippsland.

The Presbytery of Geelong should embrace the ministers and congregations of Geelong, Woady Yallock, Belfast, Colac, Skipton, and Ballaarat.

It may be recorded here that His Excellency Charles Joseph Latrobe, Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, was about to leave the Colony in

April, 1854. His Excellency was a very estimable Christian gentleman. He was at first Superintendent of the Province of Port Phillip, then Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria. His example was all on the side of morality and of the Christian life. He sympathized with the efforts of the colonists to be effectually freed from the evils of transportation, and aided materially in protecting the country from the threatened danger. The various Denominations, as well as the Presbyterian, tendered to him their expressions of high respect and their best wishes for his future welfare on the occasion of his departure.

We have now to trace the progress of this Presbyterian section, known, after the 19th April, 1854, as the Synod of Victoria, and consisting of two Presbyteries. Resuming the line of ministerial additions in the order of time, the next accession to be noticed is that of the Rev. Hugh Blair, M.A. Mr. Blair, an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church, Ireland, arrived on 10th September, 1854, per S.S. *Great Britain*. On 4th October he presented to the Melbourne Presbytery a certificate of ministerial standing from the Presbytery of Raphoe, and various testimonials besides of a highly satisfactory character. Mr. Blair was most cordially received, and with a view to his speedy settlement, he was appointed to preach at Bacchus Marsh, Gisborne, Brighton, &c., and, with the concurrence of the Presbytery of Geelong, at Colac. The result was, that before the end of the year he became the settled pastor of Colac and Ondit. Here he prosecuted his work with great success, and both congregations enjoyed a marked degree of prosperity. He was enabled to persevere in the zealous discharge of public duty until 1866, when he was under the painful necessity of retiring from the ministry, on account of serious inroads on his health. At the time of his resignation, the friends in the district showed their appreciation of his character and labours by a large presentation of money, while the General Assembly generously gave him a beneficiary interest, somewhat by anticipation, in the Infirm Ministers' Fund.

On 7th December, 1854, Mr. Alexander Duff, M.A., a licentiate from the Presbytery of Belfast, Ireland, applied to be taken under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery; Mr. Duff presented his Presbyterial certificate. He had been occupied, the preceding eight months, teaching Janefield-school. He conducted public religious service in the place once a month. He had also preached at Campbellfield, and in both places with great acceptance. Mr. Duff was appointed to preach in Brighton and Dandenong, then in the Upper Plenty, at Jackson's Creek, and at Dandenong. After a probationary career of about six months, a call from the Presbyterians of the Dandenong district was presented in his favour on 26th June, 1855. At the following meeting the call was sustained and accepted. On the 20th September he was ordained. He fixed his residence, and got his place of worship erected at Cranbourne, ten miles from Dandenong township. The two places formed his united charge. These

he continued to occupy for over twenty years, when the Presbytery came to the resolution to erect Dandenong into a separate charge. Since then Mr. Duff has confined his long continued services to Cranbourne.

On the 14th May, 1857, the Rev. J. Parker, an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church, Ireland, sought admission into the Synod of Victoria. He came from the Presbytery of Belfast. Being satisfactorily certified, he was received into connection, and as an invitation had come from Port Fairy for his appointment as a candidate in the vacant charge of Belfast, Mr. Parker was recommended to put himself in communication with the Presbytery of Geelong.

Mr. John White, a licentiate of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, applied, on 17th September, 1857, for admission into connection with the Synod. He presented certificates in support of his application from Rev. Dr. Smart, Leith, Rev. Mr. Crow, Rev. Mr. Wallen, of Edinburgh, and from Rev. Mr. M'Lean, Hobart Town. On 7th October, Mr. White was received and appointed to Tarraville and Port Albert, to preach as a candidate for the vacant charge. Mr. White continued to receive occasional appointments, but he never obtained settlement.

On 4th November, 1857, Rev. George M'Cullagh Reed applied for reception into the Synod. He was certified as an ordained minister from the Presbytery of Newry, Ireland. On the 18th Mr. Reed was duly received, after several members had, since last meeting, heard him preach. Mr. Reed was appointed to officiate three months in North Melbourne, at the request of the people. On 6th January, 1858, a call was presented, sustained, and accepted. On the 14th he was inducted into the pastoral charge. His labours were so successful that measures were soon adopted for the erection of a new and substantial place of worship. The foundation-stone of the new building was laid by Sir Henry Barkly, Governor of Victoria, on 7th April, 1859, and was named Union Church, in honour of the Union which was consummated the same day among the different bodies of Presbyterians. Mr. Reed's labours did not continue long in the district, in consequence of a call, which he accepted, to do ministerial work in Queensland.

On 4th November, 1857, Mr. Robert Hogg, a student of divinity, applied to be taken on trial, with a view to his obtaining license to preach the gospel. His certificate indicated that he had graduated as B.A. and M.A. at Glasgow University; that he had attended one session at the Theological Hall, New College, Edinburgh, and two sessions at the Theological Hall, Queen's College, Belfast; and that he had undergone satisfactory examination by the Presbytery of Bailieboro', Ireland, on all the different branches of study. After his subjection to the usual trials and examinations, he was ordained

on 14th January, 1858, at North Melbourne, as pastor of the Horsham district. A call had been forwarded at the previous meeting on the 6th, and was accepted. After labouring here for a number of years he resigned his charge and left the Colony for India.

On the 3rd March, 1858, it was reported by the committee for receiving newly arrived ministers, that the Rev. W. Taggart had been received by them into ministerial connection. He came as an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. He produced a certificate of ordination from the Presbytery of Connaught. He had preached with acceptance in the pulpits of the Melbourne and North Melbourne Churches, and, after his reception, he was recommended to proceed to Skipton, and preach there as a candidate. He did so, and a call in his favour was now laid on the table. Inasmuch as Skipton was under the Geelong Presbytery, it was agreed to instruct Mr. Taggart to repair to Geelong, where the Presbytery would deal with the call according to the laws of the Church. Mr. Taggart was duly installed into office at Skipton and Carngham. After labouring for some time, he fell into ill health, resigned, and returned to Ireland.

On 1st September, 1858, it was reported by the Committee that Rev. James Megaw and Rev. Samuel Kelly had been received on 24th August into fellowship as ordained ministers from the North of Ireland Presbyterian Church. Mr. Megaw was certified by the Presbytery of Connaught. He had been ordained at Clogher, 10th February, 1857. He accepted an appointment to officiate in South Melbourne (Windsor) till the end of the year under a definite arrangement, but on 3rd November a regular call was presented and accepted, and he was inducted on the 17th.

Mr. Kelly was certified by the Presbytery of Athlone. He had been the ordained minister of the Church at Tullamore. He was appointed to preach at Tarraville and Alberton, and, on the 6th October, a call was presented and accepted, and he was declared minister of that united charge.

On 5th January, 1859, Rev. Samuel Kelso was admitted into connection. He was an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church, Ireland. He was certified by the Presbytery of Raphoe. He was appointed to officiate at Bulla Bulla, and at Portland. On 2nd March, a call was presented in his favour from Presbyterians of Portland. He at once accepted, and was Presbyterially appointed minister of Portland.

These particulars bring the proceedings of the Synod of Victoria, chiefly in regard to the arrival and settlement of ministers, down to the time of the Union. It is necessary that we should next trace the progress of the Free Church from the close of 1851 to the same memorable point in the history.

CHAPTER VI.

FREE CHURCH SYNOD OF VICTORIA, 1852-1859.

During the entire period of 1852 the Free Church received no accession to her staff of ministers. Certainly it was not the fault of the ruling members of the Church in the Colony. These were continually reminding the Church at Home of the extraordinary increase to the population that was going on and the urgent necessity that existed for adequate ministerial supplies from the parent Church. There was no possibility for years to come of obtaining accessions to the ministry from Theological Halls in the Colony. The Free Church here had not yet got further on in providing the means of training for any learned profession than the Melbourne Academy, which merged afterwards in the Scotch College. It would be a considerable time before there could be either a University providing for an Arts course or a Hall for divinity. Meanwhile the Church, through her leaders, could secure her advancement only by appeals to the Home-Church for regular additions to the ministry.

The season, however, was exceedingly inopportune for the Home-Church giving ready response to cries for ministerial help coming from Australia. The Free Church since 1843 had a mighty work to accomplish for her own members and adherents in Scotland. Over eight years had elapsed since the Disruption, and their energies had been all that time absorbed with the task of organization, building churches and manses, equipping colleges and halls, and providing for the maintaining and extending of gospel-ministrations. It was more than could be expected that they should have it in their power to lend a very ready aid to the earnest calls sent from the Colony. The Established Church of Scotland was similarly situated as to sending ministerial help to the Synod of Australia, or, as it afterwards became, the Synod of Victoria. All the pulpits of the parish Churches and Chapels-of-ease that had been vacated by the Disruption required to be filled. It could not be an easy matter to find ministers and preachers sufficient in numbers to supply the suddenly created want. Hence, during the eight years, from 1851 to 1859, almost the entire supply for the requirements of the Synod of Victoria came from the North of Ireland Presbyterian Church rather than Scotland. All appeals sent from the Colony to the Mother Churches seemed to fall on unsympathetic ears, and brought forth no cheering response. It was not, however, the want of sympathy—it was the want of power.

At length, before the first ten years of the Free Church history in Scotland had expired, she awoke to the urgent necessities of these Southern lands as a semi-mission field. A considerable time, indeed, before this, a spirit of Colonial enterprise, for the extension of her

influence in foreign countries, became a distinguishing feature in her young life. Not only so, but from her very birth, as a separate organization, she resolved on becoming emphatically a Missionary Church. Besides providing for her own immediate and extraordinary necessities, she would pledge herself for the support of all the missionaries in foreign fields who should adhere to her standard. Besides undertaking these Home and Foreign responsibilities, she fixed her eye on Middle Island, New Zealand, as a Colonial field of her own creation. Hence, in 1848, she arranged to plant a Colony of Free Church emigrants in Otago. Accordingly, the novel spectacle was presented of a minister—the Rev. Thomas Burns, with his wife and family, formerly an Ayrshire parish minister—setting sail, under the command of Captain Andrew Elles, son of a United Presbyterian minister in Scotland, with a full complement of passengers of all ranks, trades, and professions, members of the Free Church, and founding, in 1848, the prosperous settlement of Dunedin, the Southern Edinburgh, capital of Otago.

In the same spirit of expansive Christian enterprise, the Free Church resolved, in 1852, on making Australia, more especially Victoria, a field of missionary cultivation. In terms of this resolution a collection was ordered to be made throughout the whole Church, in order to bear the expense of sending about a dozen ministers without delay to Australia. The plan adopted was to select two of their most competent and able men, with a band of young ministers, to repair to the land of gold, which was being filled with a teeming population, and there make the best arrangements in their power for supplying the spiritual wants of the people. We proceed to notice the various accessions to the ministry in the order of sequence.

On 8th February, 1853, Mr. Donald M'Donald presented himself before the Synod of the Free Church for reception into the rank of ministerial workers. The name Synod was adopted at the formation of the Denomination, on 9th June, 1847, with a prospective reference. As the body grew it would be more convenient to be divided into Presbyteries, and would also simplify the title-deeds of Church property. Although, therefore, the highest court sustained in the circumstances the somewhat imposing name of Synod, yet, at its inception, it was composed of only two ministers and one elder. The principle of Presbyterianism, however, is not affected by numbers. Mr. M'Donald produced satisfactory documents as to proving his good standing as a licentiate of the Free Church, and his having emigrated to Victoria with the full cognizance and consent of the Church authorities in Scotland. It appeared that he had been licensed at Dingwall on 6th May, 1846, and that he had received his credentials as an intending emigrant from the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh on 10th August, 1852.

The first appointment he received was to labour in the vicinity of Melbourne, in connection with the brethren in town, for a period of three months. The Committee of the Pastoral Aid Fund were

instructed to make provision as to his maintenance. On 27th April, 1853, he was specially appointed to preach to the Highlanders settled at Bulleen. At the close of this period satisfactory results were reported, and an invitation was laid on the table for a continuation of his services. A promise was given of stipend to the amount of £200 per annum. The Synod, regarding the invitation as equivalent to a call, at once arranged to take Mr. M'Donald on trial with a view to ordination, as minister of Bulleen, with as little delay as possible. On the 8th of August he was solemnly ordained to the pastorate.

Mr. M'Donald continued his labours among the Highlanders for a period of over twelve months, when the inquiry was considered by the Presbytery whether his services in Bulleen should be continued. The sphere was limited, and the scope for benefiting Gaelic-speaking people by preaching in their native tongue was small. Some time after he was transferred to Emerald Hill, as his field of cultivation, which, in later years, became designated South Melbourne. A very few years before, the Hill was destitute alike of forestry and of population. But now, in 1855, population has settled down in large numbers.

Having been duly settled over a body of Presbyterians, who desired ministerial instruction and guidance, Rev. D. M'Donald set himself earnestly to do work for his Master among English-speaking people, chiefly immigrants from Scotland. Possessed of good parts, natural and acquired, he soon gathered around him a congregation respectable both for numbers and character. He became a leading and active member of the Church Courts. Having a tact for business, he did good service in the management of the Widows and Orphans' Fund. He took a special interest in the correspondence with Government regarding grants of land and money for Church, manse, and stipend purposes. He devoted considerable attention to the interests of the New Hebrides Mission. He lent important help in the negotiations for Union, and generally had a good share of Presbyterial work allotted to him. He has served the Master full thirty-four years from ordination. He is one of the few ministers, whether of town or country, who have held office in one charge for a period of over thirty-two years, till age and infirmity cried for rest. He has always been a prominent figure in the Church Courts. The Senatus of the Aberdeen College conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. At the end of 1887 he retired from the ministry, and the Assembly assigned to him the honour of minister *emeritus*.

The Rev. Allan M'Vean appeared on 5th February, 1853, before the Synod, and presented credentials of his character and standing. He had been licensed at Fort Augustus by the Presbytery of Abertarff, on 23rd June, 1852. He arranged to sail for Victoria with a large number of Highland emigrants from Skye, and in the prospect of his rendering important service to his countrymen on the voyage—and it might be in the Colony—he was ordained by the

Presbytery of Paisley on 7th July, 1852. The ship was consigned to Portland. He arrived in the beginning of 1853. Having done some service to his Highland shipmates at Portland, he visited the Grange and preached the gospel, then went forward to Geelong and visited his brothers. He preached to the Highlanders who were settled at Geelong, then attended the Synod meeting, at Melbourne, in the beginning of February.

Having been received into union, he was appointed to officiate in Williamstown for three months. Presbyterians there had been urgent for a supply of ordinances. At a subsequent meeting he was instructed to continue his services for a second period of three months. At the meeting 26th July, he was appointed to Burnbank for three months, in answer to a petition for ministerial service. On 27th September he was appointed to labour among the Highlanders of Geelong till the following meeting of Synod. On 3rd January, 1854, he was re-appointed other three months, and during his residence there he did good work in organizing a congregation and getting a place of worship erected. He afterwards received a call from the Presbyterians in Brunswick, and was duly settled there. He took a prominent part in the negotiations for Union, identifying himself with the minority. He refused to join the Union in 1859, on the ground that the basis appeared to involve a compromise of Free Church principles. At length, however, after mature consideration, he saw it to be his duty to unite with the general body. This he did in 1867. Mr. M'Vean has proved himself an able member of the Church Courts, and he has prosecuted a long and successful ministry in the one locality. He has enlarged his Church accommodation three times, and now occupies a commodious and handsome building.

On 26th July, 1853, the Rev. John Barnet was received as a probationer under the superintendence of the Synod. His certificate showed that he had been licensed by the Presbytery of Perth on 26th November, 1851. The Synod appointed him to labour in Bellarine. After a successful pastorate here, during a period of four years, his services were transferred to Camperdown. A lamentable occurrence, however, within a few weeks of his settlement, brought his work and his life to a close. In attempting to cross a swollen stream on horseback he was swept down by the current and was drowned. The deplorable accident afforded another illustration of the perils to which ministers were exposed in the bush while prosecuting their work in early times. Deep sympathy was excited in the neighbourhood, and a sum of £500 was speedily collected for the bereaved wife and family.

At this meeting of Synod the attention of the members was called to a public announcement that a deep and practical interest in the spiritual welfare of the Presbyterians of Australia had been manifested by the Free Church of Scotland. In consequence of arrangements made and authorized by the General Assembly, the

Colonial Committee had selected and set apart a number of ministers for pastoral work in the colonies, more especially in Victoria. The members of Synod were exceedingly cheered with the prospect of a large accession to their number, to assist them in overtaking the spiritual necessities of the population. The greater number of those who were selected were young men recently licensed, and were ordained with a view to their going forth on their important mission. Two of the ministers sent out were reported to be men of high standing, ability, and experience, who should give effective aid in consolidating and organizing the Free Presbyterian Church, particularly in devising and carrying out such measures as would be requisite for training young men for the ministry of the gospel. The young ministers were designated for special localities in the Colony, subject, however, to the controlling power of the Colonial Synod.

The Synod, while rejoicing at the large-hearted interest manifested in the progress and efficiency of the Free Church in the Colony, yet could not approve of the Colonial Committee failing to correspond with the Moderator on the subject. Neither did the brethren think it wise in the Committee in Edinburgh to nominate probationers to particular localities, seeing the settlement of ministers in a young and rising community could only be properly determined by local circumstances.

On 27th September, 1853, the Synod had positive proof of the truth of the public reports. Indeed the Press intelligence of the important meeting held in Edinburgh, and the addresses delivered on the occasion by the emigrating ministers and others, had preceded the arrival of the brethren. The members of Synod and of the Church generally, therefore, were full of joyful anticipation. They learned that the two leading ministers were the Rev. M'Intosh Mackay, D.D., of Dunoon, and the Rev. Adam Cairns, D.D., of Cupar, Fife, and now at this meeting there appeared in person Rev. Dr. Cairns, Rev. William Henderson, Rev. Archibald Simpson, and Rev. Alexander Adam, M.A., who had all arrived in the *Hurricane* about a fortnight before. These brethren laid their credentials on the table, dated 1st March and 13th April, from which it appeared that Dr. Cairns was designated to form a new congregation of immigrant Presbyterians in Melbourne. Mr. Henderson had been ordained with a view to his labouring in Williamstown; Mr. Simpson had been ordained, and Warrnambool was intended as his sphere of labour. Mr. Adam, having also been ordained, was nominated for Albury. In the reception of the brethren, the Synod gave public thanksgiving to Almighty God for His great goodness to the Church, in sending, in answer to their many prayers, such a large addition to their numbers.

The Synod at once proceeded to allocate, according to their judgment, the different brethren to their spheres of labour. It was arranged that Dr. Cairns should commence his public labours in the Temperance Hall, with a view to the formation of a new congregation in Melbourne. An iron house, which he had brought out from

Scotland, was being erected on the College ground. The house was brought out at a cost of £1,000, and would soon be ready for occupation. As an illustration of the enormous rise in wages through the gold discovery, the cost of erection amounted to as much as the original purchase.

On the 3rd January, 1854, Dr. Cairns was able to report that, in fulfilment of the appointment of Synod, he had preached in the Temperance Hall ; that the forming congregation had already erected a temporary place of worship ; and that it was completed at a cost of £1,000 in the short space of seventeen days, and was capable of accommodating 1,000 people. The attendance in the forenoon was full, and the applicants for sittings were chiefly from Richmond and Collingwood.

The site on which the building was erected was in East Melbourne, adjoining that on which the Scotch College was built. A new site of 1½ acres had been recently obtained from Government. At the first meeting of Synod, 27th September, 1853, after the brethren arrived, the question regarding the acceptance of Church and manse sites from Government came under discussion. The repudiation of all grants, whether of land or money, from the State for religious purposes was a fundamental principle of the Free Church. Dr. Cairns, on finding how the matter stood, and perceiving, with the eye of a shrewd statesman, that the refusal to accept of State-aid in any form would be a great obstacle to the progress of the Church, set himself at once to have the principle modified. Moreover, he reasoned that the acceptance of Government support was in perfect accord with the theoretical basis of the Free Church of Scotland, so long as there was no interference on the part of the Civil power with doctrine, discipline, or government in the Church. Strenuous opposition, however, was offered by the older members of the Synod, specially by Rev. Messrs. Tait, Hastie, Miller, and Hume. The ground of opposition was the Government giving "the same countenance and support to the delusions of Antichrist as to the truth of God."

The modification now proposed by Dr. Cairns had reference to the acceptance of land only. It was to the effect—"That without touching the protest of the Synod against the indiscriminate endowment of all religions by the State, it be resolved that, in regard to sites for ecclesiastical buildings, the congregations of this Church be left at liberty to act on their own convictions, all applications to Government for sites to pass through the Moderator of Synod." It appeared to some of the brethren, that it was an extraordinary course to attempt to change, in so summary a fashion, a fundamental principle in the body. The circumstances, however, were regarded as extraordinary, and the necessities of the case would not admit of ceremony or brook delay. The question, too, required to be settled by a Synod that was largely composed of ministers just recently arrived, yet having a seat and a vote, being allowed "to sit, vote, and determine ;" and yet the one-half of them were not in any settled charge. The vote, therefore, strictly interpreted, could

not be approved by the older members of Synod as regular and valid. The members on taking the vote stood 8 to 4 in favour of altering what was regarded as a vital part of the constitution.

One encroachment having been made in rather an off-hand manner on the basis of the Church, it need not excite surprise if another should soon follow. Accordingly, on 5th July, 1854, a resolution was proposed, without preliminary notice, "That the fourth resolution of this Church on State-support for religion be rescinded." The Synod, however, was still smarting rather strongly, at least in its older members, on account of the agreement of a majority to accept sites from the State, to be willing to take another step further so soon in the same direction. Hence the proposition to open the way for the reception of money as well as land was negatived by a majority of three.

A more vigorous effort was made, in November of the same year, to secure liberty to share in the money grants of the State, and was successful by a majority of 8 to 7. A number, however, would not avail themselves of the liberty granted.

In connection with this subject, it may be stated that at the time Port Phillip was separated from New South Wales, when a new Constitution was granted, it was secured that £6,000 per annum should be set apart from the general revenue for the support of public worship. Again, in 1853, when the gold mines were pouring out their richest treasures, even to the extent of over twelve million pounds in the year, the Legislative Council, having only one chamber, and that partly nominee, in their great liberality raised the annual gratuity to £30,000. So eager were they to devote so large a portion of the public funds to sacred purposes that all the clauses of the Bill passed through the committee in one day. One of the members signalized the occasion by declaring that "he was in favour of religion both here and hereafter." The liberality of the State did not even end here. When the new Constitution Act, securing a bi-cameral Parliament, came into operation in 1855, it was found that the 53rd clause provided a sum of £50,000 to be given for religious purposes. And this amount being secured by a clause in the Constitution, which required an absolute majority in both Houses before the law could be changed, would make it a very difficult business indeed to get it repealed. The Voluntaries, with all the agitation which they could carry on by public meetings, petitions, leagues, lectures, and publications, had their work before them. And with all the influence they could bring to bear on the mind of the community, and on the votes of the two Houses of the Legislature, it required a lengthened crusade of about fifteen years to secure the abolition of the obnoxious clause. State-aid was abolished in South Australia in 1859, in New South Wales in 1862, but not in Victoria till 1870, and even then with five years' grace.

The following is a copy of the Government-Schedule of distribution of the £50,000 among the different religious sections in the community for 1856 :—

Church of England	£28,614	2	0
Roman Catholics	10,837	15	0
Church of Scotland	4,505	3	2
Free Presbyterian Church	3,203	3	7
Wesleyans	3,723	17	8
Lutherans	802	6	6
Unitarians	314	2	6
	£52,000	10	5

The career of Dr. Cairns in his new wooden Church was one of unparalleled success. In a short time the wood required to give place to stone. The first erection was temporary, and it was soon found that in summer the crowds filling the building could not worship with comfort. A large stone building (with spire) was resolved upon, and in due time was erected and occupied. The site was in the immediate vicinity of a quarry hole, but it was on elevated ground and in proximity to several ecclesiastical buildings. It was close to a reserve which in due time would become a favourite resort, known as the lovely Fitzroy Gardens, when all unseemly features of scenery should disappear, and beauty and retirement reign.

The stone church cost £8,000, and a substantial and commodious manse was afterwards erected, immediately adjoining the place of worship. The marked success which attended the labours of Dr. Cairns was owing to a variety of causes. He was head and shoulders, figuratively as well as literally, above most men. He had a bold, fearless, and enterprising spirit, a fluent and popular style of address. He was thoroughly evangelical in his views, earnest and impressive in his expositions of divine truth, and was always ready to take part in public movements for the suppression of vice and the promotion of morality. He took a lively interest in education, specially in establishing the means of training young men for the ministry. He held the office of Principal of the Theological Hall for a number of years.

His action in favour of the proposed union of the different sections of Presbyterians was decided and earnest. His ardent temperament could hardly brook the hindrances and delays which were continually arising in unexpected ways, rendering the exercise of patience indispensable to success. His impetuosity of disposition, especially in what he believed to be a good cause, was very apt to lead him into extremes, and thereby endanger the accomplishment of the very object which he most earnestly desired.

His mission to Victoria doubtless led him to devote all his energies in the first years of his ministry to promote specially the interests of the Free Church. In all the negotiations for Union, therefore, it was his endeavour that there should be no compromise of Free Church principles in the basis. While he was a thorough Presbyterian, especially in the Free Church aspect, yet he was liberal in his intercourse with other evangelical Churches and ministers. After the Presbyterian Union was consummated, he lent his whole influence towards the consolidating and expanding of the united Body.

On 27th September, 1853, a petition was presented to the Synod from the Presbyterians of Williamstown, for the services of the Rev. William Henderson, one of the newly arrived ministers. In order to secure the settlement of a minister in due form, a committee was appointed, with full Presbyterial powers, to call a meeting in Williamstown, to ascertain the object of the people's choice, and if Mr. Henderson was the minister-elect, and accepted the call, then to proceed according to rule with the induction. The settlement was duly carried into effect. Mr. Henderson was possessed of considerable individuality of character. He was of a tall and handsome form, his style was vigorous, and his address was eloquent and impressive. His talents and attainments were above the average. Besides the usual training in Scotland, he studied some time in Germany. His current of thought seemed to run considerably in the German channel. His popular gifts, his originality, and his energetic pulpit oratory, soon attracted a considerable congregation. During his short term of work at the shipping port, he got erected a place of worship, a manse, and a school-house.

His attractive gifts in a short time opened up for him a more extended sphere. In 1857 he was inducted into the charge of a congregation of Presbyterians in the great gold-mining community of Ballaarat. He soon drew around him a large and influential body of Presbyterians, and was successful in securing the erection of handsome buildings for worship, for education, and for minister's family. He distinguished himself by his writings through the Press on many occasions. He became editor of the *Presbyterian Review* for a short time in 1879. The book of greatest pretensions which he published was "Christianity and Modern Thought. His views, however, at times ran too much in the German groove to be much relished by the Church in general. He continued to labour in Ballaarat, and retained his popularity through a ministry of nearly thirty years. At length the active brain, and the well-tried physical powers of a vigorous frame, called for rest. A severe attack of illness laid him prostrate on 22nd July, 1884.

At the same Synodical meeting, on 27th September, Rev. Archibald Simpson was first employed in supplying the pulpits of ministers in Melbourne and Geelong, while they were engaged in evangelistic tours in the country. On 4th January, 1854, Mr. Simpson was appointed to Sandridge, now Port Melbourne, and Emerald Hill, now South Melbourne, for six months. On 4th April, after three months' experience, he reported that those localities were not in a position to support a minister. He next visited Bendigo in the interest of the Presbyterian cause, and as a pioneer did good service there. His services were then transferred to the Leigh, where he obtained settlement at the hands of the Geelong Presbytery. Here he had full scope for evangelistic work in an extensive squatting district. His labours were anxiously directed towards the spiritual good of the large class of men who were annually congregated at the different stations at shearing time.

Many of these in that early period had been inured to convict life, were of a low moral type of character, and stood urgently in need of religious instruction. He therefore directed his energies towards the rescue of these men from evil habits, and the elevation of their personal and social life. After a long course of faithful and devoted work in his Master's service, the infirmities of age rendered it necessary that he should receive assistance in his duties. The aid he received did not long suffice. His serious declension in physical strength brought him to the resolution to retire altogether from his pastoral charge. He therefore resigned in 1882, and, with a view to rest, and it might be to partial restoration, he took up his abode at Queenscliff. His term of retirement was short. He was called away to his heavenly rest in 1883.

The last of the four ministers who were admitted into Synodical connection on 27th September, 1853, was Rev. Alexander Adam. On the same day of his admission he was appointed to Ballaarat and Burnbank. On 4th January, 1854, he gave a report to the Synod of his labours. At the same meeting it was reported that an invitation was being prepared at Burnbank for securing the permanent services of Mr. Adam, and that they promised a stipend of £300 per annum. In a short time the settlement was effected, under the conditions of a two-fold charge, embracing Burnbank and Beaufort. A wide field of usefulness was opened to view in this superior squatting district. The attention of the minister would be specially required on behalf of a number of neighbouring centres of population. The townships of Lexton, Ararat, and Carngham were at accessible distances, and would stand in need of occasional services. Hence, in course of time, these became the seats of distinct ministerial settlement. Mr. Adam's labours, as population multiplied and neighbouring Churches increased, were more restricted to his original sphere. His residence became fixed at Beaufort, and his long-continued labours in the one district speak emphatically of the efficiency and acceptance of his life-work. He still prosecutes his work in the same locality with faithfulness and success. He was called to fill the Moderator's chair in 1881.

On 3rd January, 1854, the Rev. George Divorty was introduced to the Synod as a recent arrival. He had been ordained by the Presbytery of Garioch on 10th May, 1853, with a view to his emigrating to Victoria. He was fully commissioned from the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, and his destined sphere of labour, if all circumstances were favourable, was Prahran. He had already commenced his work there, under the sanction of the Committee appointed to receive newly-arrived ministers, and his report was favourable. He was appointed for three months. On 4th April, in reporting the result of his labours, he set forth the importance of changing his position, and making the village of Prahran itself, not the outskirts, the chief place for holding service. The little village has in course of time become a flourishing City.

By way of providing for the exigencies of ministerial settlement, Mr. Divorty brought with him a large wooden Church and a manse of the same material. The total cost of these, however, by the time they were erected and made fit for occupation, proved the foresight to be only small economy. The site was outside the village, in South Yarra. The congregation was not very numerous, the members were not wealthy, and the debt was oppressive. His energies were exceedingly strained, and after struggling very successfully with his difficulties during a period of six years, his health failed, and, under medical advice, he resigned and returned to Scotland. He died at Edinburgh in 1887.

At the same meeting (3rd January), the Rev. W. S. Login was introduced. He had been an ordained minister of the Free Church at Papa-Westray, in the Presbytery of Orkney. The Colonial Committee in Edinburgh, on 19th July, 1853, accepted his proffered services as an emigrating minister, and appointed him, under the sanction of the Colonial Synod, to Gippsland as his sphere of labour. In answer to an urgent appeal from Gippsland for a minister, Mr. Login was appointed for three months. The result was he became a settled minister at Sale. The Presbyterians in this district had long clamoured for a minister. And the Colonial Committee, at headquarters, had been for over a dozen years appealed to by the ministers in the Colony, on behalf of that important part of the country. During all that time, however, the Church at Home had been passing through fiery conflicts and unparalleled efforts to establish a new Denomination. It was only of late that she had got so far disentangled as to be able to listen to the Colonial cry, and to lend effective aid.

The district to which Mr. Login was allocated was an extensive one. In order to do justice to the crying necessities of other parts, he could officiate at Sale only on each alternate Sabbath. The distances to which he required to travel to do duty elsewhere were considerable. The districts standing in urgent need of his services were the Avon, the Glengarry, and the Mitchell, and these were distant twelve, twenty-eight, and fifty miles respectively. His first communion was dispensed, in 1855, to twenty members. He has prosecuted his work steadily in the district till various Churches have been planted in localities where he acted the pioneer. In 1882 he obtained the assistance of a young preacher to relieve him in part of his labours, which were now becoming, through advanced age, somewhat oppressive. And in 1885 he resigned his pastoral charge and retired from public work. The Assembly gave him the status of minister *emeritus*.

On the same 3rd of January, 1854, there appeared before the Synod a somewhat distinguished minister from the Free Church of Scotland. The Rev. MacIntosh Mackay, D.D., of Dunoon, had made up his mind to cast in his lot with the Free Church of Victoria. His object was chiefly to devote his labours to the advancement of

the spiritual interests of the Highlanders in the Colony. Accordingly the Colonial Committee, on 31st March, 1853, furnished him with the usual credentials and commendations. They had great satisfaction in securing the services of a minister so gifted and experienced, and so deeply interested in the welfare of the Highland population. He had done good service among his countrymen, not only while parish minister at Dunoon, but especially after the Disruption. He became convener of the Gaelic Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, and had the charge of ministerial supply to the congregations formed in the Highlands and the Hebrides Islands. He had also been instrumental in forming an association of noblemen and gentlemen, in order to assist the poor Highlanders to emigrate to Australia. H.R.H. the late Prince Albert was its patron. The Colonial Committee in Edinburgh guaranteed a stipend of £250 per annum, for three years, from his arrival in the Colony. They were under the impression that a large Colony of Highlanders had been planted in and around Kyneton, and that this might be the most suitable centre of his pastoral work. The local Synod, however, it was admitted, would be the best judge.

The Highland immigrants were scattered more or less over the Colony, following the occupations they were best suited for. There was a small congregation in Geelong, there were numbers at the mines, there were a good few in Bulleen, and the greatest number in and near Melbourne. Rev. D. M. Sinclair, who was charged with the formation of a congregation of Highlanders in Melbourne, and who met in the Protestant Hall, offered to resign his pastorate in favour of Dr. Mackay, if that should be considered the best arrangement for advancing the highest interests of the Highlanders. This disinterested proposal was ultimately carried into effect. Meanwhile, however, Dr. Mackay and the brethren in the Synod took time to consider, and the Doctor employed his time in visiting the Highlanders in various localities, especially at Ballaarat, to know how they were situated, and to be able to judge what plans it would be best to adopt for his own usefulness and their good. Nowhere did there appear to be a body of Gaelic-speaking people who were able, both by numbers and means, to support a minister who should conduct spiritual ministrations wholly in Gaelic. Besides, the children were growing up in the knowledge and the use of the English language, and however tenacious the Highlanders might be of their much beloved mother-tongue, there was no prospect of the Gaelic being perpetuated to any extent, as a distinct medium of speech, when the older members of the Highland community should have passed away.

With the view of forming as large a congregation as possible of Gaelic-speaking people for public worship in their native language, Dr. Mackay applied without delay to Government for a site in Melbourne, on which to erect a Church specially for Highlanders. An allotment of two acres was obtained in Carlton, fronting a reserve intended for public gardens. The Doctor was indefatigable in collecting money to enable him to push forward the erection. The

most of the Highlanders were poor, and could give no substantial help, but his ambition, to have a highly creditable building, was not to be thwarted. He found it hard work to collect a sum sufficient to meet his views, and a substantial and commodious building was at length finished with a huge burden of debt. This pecuniary entanglement proved a great hindrance to his comfort and usefulness.

After the place of worship was opened under the name of St. Andrew's, the arrangement for the services was that the morning service should be in Gaelic, and the evening in English. The congregations were good, the discourses were rich in gospel truth, and were earnestly delivered. But the heavy debt he felt to be crushing, and as an opening of a door of usefulness presented itself in Sydney, in the beginning of 1856, he felt it his duty to accept, and so his services were lost to this Colony.

With these numerous and important additions to the ministry, the Synod was exceedingly gratified. The members were now settled over a wide extent of country, and embraced a considerable number of active workers in the vineyard. After deliberation it was thought advisable, for the sake of efficiency, that the Synod should be divided. It was hardly possible to exercise satisfactory supervision over such an extent of territory, stretching so far north-east and west. The brethren in the distant parts of the Colony could not be expected to attend, except at long intervals, the meetings of Synod, and take part in deliberations affecting the interests of the Church. It was therefore agreed in January, 1854, to divide the Synod into two—the Presbytery of Melbourne, comprehending all ministers and congregations to the east of the Werribee, and the Presbytery of Geelong, including those to the west. The former were appointed to meet on the 5th, and the latter on the 10th January. This arrangement was by no means premature. Through the liberality and sagacity of the Church at Home, and the energy of the Church in Victoria, the cry in reference to emigrating ministers was, "Still they come."

On 31st July, 1854, Rev. James Nish arrived, with full credentials from the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh. The Presbytery of Melbourne resolved at once to appoint him to the goldfields at Bendigo. The chief town formed afterwards was called Sandhurst. It was over two years and a half since the first rush to this mining district took place. A large population was now congregated in the search for gold, apparently as a settled industry. Bendigo had become quite a rival of Ballaarat. It is true the embryo town, in due time to become a handsome city, was as yet almost altogether constructed of canvas. There were streets, but all of tents. Already, however, wooden tenements had begun to supplant the calico.

Among the miners were many Presbyterians, and they hailed the appearance of a settled spiritual instructor. At the same time his settlement must partake of the uncertain tenure of the mining industry itself. In regard to the comforts of settled family life, he must not expect to have better accommodation than the circum-

stances will admit. Accordingly, his habitation must be, at least for a time, a tent, and as to a place of worship, it will require to be of the same frail character. As the staple industry progresses in permanence, so will the Church and the manse. Mr. Nish, afterwards Dr. Nish, being the first resident Free Church minister in the district, has had the gratification of seeing the canvas give place to the wood, the wood to the stone, the frail habitation to the substantial structure, the mixed crowd of enterprising miners to a populous city of intelligent and well-ordered people, with all the usual accompaniments of art, science, and religion, while the Church and manse have exchanged the slim fabric for the enduring material. Mr. Nish, being a young man of good talent and popular gifts, soon gathered around him a prosperous congregation. His support was so far secured by the Government allowance for chaplains at the goldfields. Being the first minister of the Presbyterian Church who was settled so far north from Melbourne, much work devolved upon him in the way of evangelizing in the rising townships of the neighbourhood. Hence there is hardly a congregation that has been formed in a very extensive district, in after years, in which he has not acted an important part as pioneer.

Mr. Nish has been distinguished by his energy and business habits, and has figured very prominently in discussions in Church Courts. His powers of debate are of no common order. His knowledge of Church law is extensive and special. His abilities would have enabled him to shine at the Bar. In 1880 he was chosen by the Assembly as their representative at the General Council of Presbyterians, held in Philadelphia. In the same year, the College of Princeton conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Dr. Nish has taken a prominent part for a number of years in preparing the Churches of Australia and Tasmania for Federation. After numerous conferences, held by the delegates of the different Bodies alternately in Melbourne and in Sydney, the efforts were at length crowned with success. It has been agreed in the meantime that the Federal Council should be principally a Court of Appeal. An effort has been made to bring the different Churches into harmony of action in a variety of important matters. There seemed no reason why they should not act in concert in regard to missions to the heathen, the training of young men for the ministry, the forms of worship, the psalmody used in public praise, and generally the rules by which business in the Church Courts should be guided. In the framing of laws for the government of the whole federated Body, Dr. Nish has taken upon himself, it may truly be said, the entire burden. The task has proved itself to be little short of Herculean. In recognition of his claim to the highest distinction which the United Churches could bestow upon him, he was unanimously chosen to be the Moderator of the first Federal Council. This memorable Assembly met in Sydney on 14th July, 1886. The federation of the Churches is not to be regarded as a scheme of finality. It is rather intended as a stepping-stone to Union.

The Rev. Robert Sutherland, M.A., was a fellow-passenger of the Rev. James Nish in the *Hurricane*. Immediately after his arrival in Hobson's Bay, on 31st July, 1854, he repaired to Geelong and put himself under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery there. He was forthwith appointed to minister at Batesford and Russell's Bridge. Mr. Sutherland was a man of highly creditable parts, was a good scholar, but what was of superior importance, he was an earnest preacher of the Word. He distinguished himself in a very special manner by the most zealous endeavours to open up preaching stations in the district, and to establish the means of grace in a variety of centres. Accordingly, he was successful in getting erected one manse and no fewer than seven stone Churches, and, what is still more astonishing, organizing about twelve congregations in the Western District. He was inducted into the charge at Allansford in 1862. After a great amount of faithful and successful work, he resolved on retiring from his pastoral charge and returning to his native land. This he did in 1876. It does not appear that he ever resumed the charge of a congregation in Scotland, but he improved his leisure time in compiling a History of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. This was published in London in 1877, the history reaching to 1875. Some time after, having retired to his native clime in the north of Scotland, he had gone all alone one day to the sea, it is supposed to bathe, when, by a mysterious Providence, he was called away from the toils of earth to the rest of heaven. His lifeless body was found on the rocks, partially dressed.

The Rev. Arthur Paul, an ordained minister, duly commissioned from the Colonial Committee, Edinburgh, became a member of the Melbourne Presbytery on 23rd November, 1854. He also presented an extract minute of the Synod of Eastern Australia, accepting his resignation as a minister of that Church. At this meeting of Presbytery he accepted a call from Richmond, and was inducted into his charge there on 5th December. His services were transferred to St. Kilda on 2nd October, 1855. He was a young preacher of decidedly superior gifts. Although his talents were good, his pulpit powers were not of a kind to draw a large congregation. When he commenced his public work the population was sparse in the neighbourhood, and the growth of the place was slow. Mr. Paul assumed a prominent position in the Church by the strenuous opposition he offered to the basis of union, on which the three Presbyterian Denominations agreed to become an incorporated body. He posed as a genuine Free Churchman, who maintained that the projected amalgamation involved a serious compromise. The matter of dispute was thoroughly discussed by the Free Church Assembly in Edinburgh, and the basis of union was triumphantly declared to be perfectly sound on Free Church principles. Mr. Paul, however, would not yield, and has continued to maintain an isolated position.

The Rev. James Baird arrived in 1855. His credentials from the Free Church authorities at Home were satisfactory, and he was

appointed to labour at the goldfields, Ballaarat. Through the stated services of Rev. T. Hastie, a congregation had been formed, and was now prepared to receive the appointment of a settled minister. The goldfield was not more than five years old, and as yet, to a very great extent, was a canvas town. More substantial buildings were fast making their appearance. The mining interest had all the aspect of becoming permanent. Mr. Baird was under the necessity of preaching in temporary erections, and finding for himself the best accommodation he could obtain. After prosecuting his work for about three years, he resigned his charge.

Rev. William M'Intosh was settled in Ararat in 1855. This was a leading goldfield, and a great squatting and farming district. He died in 1860.

Rev. John M'Dougal was received 1st April, 1856, as a licentiate of the Edinburgh Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland. He presented satisfactory credentials from the Colonial Committee. He had been licensed on the 4th August, 1852. Mr. M'Dougal was appointed to labour within the bounds of the Presbytery of Geelong.

On 1st April it was reported to the Synod that since last meeting there had been received into connection Rev. Dugald MacCalman. He was a licentiate of the Free Church of Scotland. His credentials showed that he had been licensed by the Free Presbytery of Lorn and Mull, and the Colonial Committee had commissioned him to labour in Victoria, under the superintendence of the Free Synod of Victoria. Mr. MacCalman was appointed to supply the vacant pulpit of St. Andrew's, Carlton, for three months. After this he transferred his services to the west, and received a call from Narracoorte, on the borders of South Australia. He was settled here in 1857. His labours, however, took an extensive range, from north, south, east, and west, reaching the river Murray, Guichen Bay, and Penola. He laboured in the district till 1880, when he obtained leave to retire for a time to recruit his shattered health. But he never recovered, and in 1881 he fell asleep.

Rev. Robert Fleming appeared on the Synod roll on 4th November, 1856, having been admitted into ministerial fellowship since the previous meeting. Mr. Fleming laboured at Belfast under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Geelong.

Rev. John Grant took his seat as a member of Synod on 7th April, 1857. He was first appointed to New South Wales, but he came to Victoria, and obtained a charge in Beechworth. Thence his services were transferred to Maldon. He had excellent abilities, and was an acceptable preacher. But he did not continue long in the ministry.

Rev. Angus M'Donald brought the usual satisfactory testimonials

from Edinburgh, and was received into connection in 1857. He took his seat in the Synod meeting of 3rd November of that year. He was settled in Hamilton, and devoted himself to the evangelistic work required of all ministers settled in the country. He established preaching stations and he formed congregations at Cavendish, Branxholme, Dunkeld, and Penshurst. He laboured with diligence and success for about ten years, when his work was brought to a sudden termination by a fall from his horse. The fall was fatal. He left a widow and family to lament his loss, and an attached congregation to mourn over the distressing incident. The people manifested their deep sympathy by subscribing a large amount of money for the widow and children.

The Rev. William Fraser appeared before the Synod on 3rd November, 1857, and presented his credentials. Mr. Fraser had been minister of Kilbrandon in the Free Church Presbytery of Lorn and Mull. Commissioners at Home had been appointed with full powers to select a suitable minister to fill the vacant charge of St. Andrew's, Carlton. Mr. Fraser was the one chosen, and he was loosed from his charge by the Presbytery at their meeting at Oban on the 30th April, 1857. On the 16th June the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh gave him high commendation to the Church in Victoria.

After his induction into the charge of the Gaelic congregation, Mr. Fraser carried on his pastoral work in a quiet and acceptable manner. About the subject of Union, however, with the other Presbyterian Churches, a division of opinion sprang up among his people. In consequence of a divided feeling in the Presbytery on the question, a minority of the Synod by their opposition created a large amount of agitation in the Church, and went so far as strongly to protest against the projected Union. The St. Andrew's congregation unfortunately became divided into two parties, the larger party being in full sympathy with the Synod's minority, whereas Mr. Fraser sympathized with the majority in the Synod, and with the Synod's resolution to go into Union. After the consummation in 1859 he found his position very uncomfortable, and he readily accepted a call from the Presbyterians at Bulla Bulla, a farming district about 15 miles north from Melbourne. Here he prosecuted his work in peace till, in 1873, he passed away to a higher sphere.

The Rev. Charles Moir also appeared on 3rd November, 1857, asking admission into the Synod. He had been labouring in Penang, India, in the service of the Free Church, but had returned to Scotland. He informed the Colonial Committee, Edinburgh, of his final desire to leave Penang and wish to carry out his resolution to emigrate to Australia. On 16th June, 1857, the Committee gave him his credentials, warmly commending him to the brethren in Victoria. He was appointed to take charge of the Presbyterian cause in St. Kilda. Here he erected a commodious and substantial place of worship on a central and elevated part of the town. He

continued to occupy the field and prosecute his work with assiduity and success. His congregation was strong and stable under his ministry. He was a useful member of the Church Courts. At length, in 1872, he resigned his charge and returned to Scotland.

Besides these two brethren, the Rev. George Mackie presented himself at the same time, seeking admission into ministerial connection. Mr. Mackie had been sent out by the Colonial Committee at Home in August, 1848, but his destination was New South Wales. He called at Melbourne in January, 1849, on his way. He became a member of the Free Church Synod of Eastern Australia, and was settled in Kiama. He received regular disjunction from the Presbytery of Sydney on 7th August, 1857, and was commended in affectionate terms to the esteem and fellowship of the brethren in the sister Church of Victoria. He was appointed to the Geelong Presbytery, and was inducted, in the beginning of 1858, into the charge of the congregations at Lake Learmonth and Burrumbeet. The pioneer had been previously at work organizing these places. Mr. Mackie was a man of good attainments, of superior pulpit gifts, of great practical energy, and of a catholic spirit. He did not, therefore, confine his services to his own immediate neighbourhood. He paid special visits to Clunes, Creswick, and Miners' Rest, conducting evangelistic services and organizing congregations.

After a course of successful work here, he resigned his charge in 1860, and within a short time his services were transferred to Horsham. Having prosecuted a similar successful career in this extended pastoral district, he was next transferred to South Yarra. His induction was on 13th May, 1862. He was equally distinguished for his untiring efforts in the interests of this congregation, of the Presbytery, of the Church generally, and of every good cause to which he could lend a helping hand in the community. He took very special interest in the advancement of the cause of temperance. He became Moderator of the General Assembly in 1871, and within a few weeks after he was struck down by a fatal illness. He died 12th December, 1871, amid universal regrets.

The arrival of these three brethren afforded the liveliest satisfaction to the Synod, and they offered special thanksgiving to God for the important accession to their number, which they had long prayed for and had now received.

On this occasion the threefold blessing received was not to be all for which the brethren in the Synod would have cause to praise the Lord. At this same meeting, of 3rd November, there were two probationers from the Free Church of Scotland and a student of divinity, who forthwith proceeded to place their credentials before the Synod. These were Rev. Alexander Proudfoot, Rev. Francis Robert Muter Wilson, and Mr. Evan M'Donald.

It appeared from the documents presented that Mr. Proudfoot had been licensed by the Free Church Presbytery of Ayr on 27th June, 1854, and on 16th June, 1857, the Colonial Committee, Edinburgh,

commended him to the brethren of the Victorian Church. It was arranged that he should labour in connection with the Geelong Presbytery. He was appointed to Batesford and Sutherland's Creek. He prosecuted his work here for a few years with much diligence and acceptance, but failing health rendered it necessary that he should resign and seek a warmer clime. He found his way to Queensland, where he soon yielded to an inveterate attack of lung-disease, and lay down to rest from his labours till the resurrection morn.

Mr. Wilson had been licensed by the Presbytery of Stirling on 21st August, 1856. On 3rd June he was commended by the Colonial Committee, Edinburgh, to a cordial welcome from the brethren in Victoria. He, too, was allotted to the Geelong Presbytery as a probationer under their superintendence. He was appointed to labour in Camperdown and vicinity. He established regular service at Terang, and formed very good congregations in both places. His labours were conducted with great acceptance for many years. He took a prominent part in Church work, and displayed considerable powers of debate. He held the office of Convener of the Business Committee in the Assembly for several years. He has also displayed some literary ability in the memoir of Rev. I. Hetherington which he published after that brother's decease. He filled the office of Moderator in 1875-6. On 21st August, 1877, his ministerial services were transferred to Kew, where his labours were interrupt d for a time by an attack of illness. This was the occasion of his paying a visit to the fatherland. Some time after his return he became capable of full duty.

Mr. Evan M'Donald, an advanced divinity student, was commended cordially as a young man of much promise to the brethren in Victoria. The document was given at the meeting in Edinburgh, of date 21st May, 1856. On his arrival in the Colony he was introduced to the Melbourne Presbytery, and he prosecuted his studies under their supervision with a view to license. On the 1st September, 1857, he had given so much satisfaction in regard to his attainments that the Presbytery resolved on asking the Synod at their meeting in November for leave to take him on trial for license. During the progress of his studies he conducted public services in Kyneton, and his labours were much appreciated. At length, after all the preliminary work was settled, he was ordained to the pastorate in Kyneton on 23rd. February, 1858. Here he continued to discharge his duties with much encouragement and success. A substantial Church and manse were erected soon after his settlement. But his infirm health did not admit of a long occupation. He died on 24th July, 1861, deeply regretted by a large number of friends in the town and district.

The Rev. John Clark arrived in the Colony in the beginning of 1858. He appeared at the Synod meeting of 6th April, asking

admission into the Church. His certificates showed that he had been licensed by the Presbytery of Turriff, Scotland. He came commended by the Colonial Committee in Edinburgh, and was cordially welcomed by the Synod. He was soon settled in Williamstown, vacant by the transference of Rev. William Henderson to Ballaarat. He has laboured with diligence and success in the town, and has taken an active part in the work of the Church. He has been specially interested in the work of the Foreign Mission field. He acted as convener for several years of the Committee of the New Hebrides Mission. He has been always ready to show kind hospitality, and do good service to the missionaries on their arrival and departure. Many ministers have been similarly indebted to Mr. Clark for their first welcome into the Colony.

On 7th December, 1858, the Rev. John Strachan Moir made his first appearance at the Synod, seeking connection with the Free Church. He was one of the ten young ministers who were sent out to Australia in that bright impulse of Christian philanthropy which animated the Assembly in Edinburgh in 1853. Mr. Moir's allocation was Adelaide. He laboured in the neighbourhood of that chief city of the sister Colony for about four years. After the experience he acquired, he deemed it his duty to resign, and to join the Church in Victoria. The Synod having been satisfied with his reasons for leaving South Australia, and finding all his credentials of a satisfactory character, cordially received him. The sphere of labour allotted to him was Brighton, which was vacant through the removal of Rev. John M'Lachlan, in order to labour in the neighbourhood of Melbourne, under the superintendence of the Presbytery. Mr. Moir was inducted into this charge on 18th January, 1859. Meanwhile, a call was laid on the table from the Presbyterians of Ararat in favour of Mr. Moir. It belonged to the Presbytery of Geelong to dispose of this call. His settlement at Ararat was not carried into effect. He remained several years at Brighton. His services were transferred to South Gippsland. He also filled the charge at Meredith. At length he took an appointment to the Scotch College as an assistant master. Then he became Rector of the Corporate High School at Sandhurst. While prosecuting his duties here he fell into very serious trouble, which some time after brought his labours and his life to a close. He died in 1877.

An important resolution was adopted at the meeting of Synod on the 8th December. There had been large accessions to the ministry of the Free Church since 1852. The number of congregations had borne a corresponding increase. These were spread over a wide area of country, and it was impossible to secure a full representation of the congregations at the monthly Presbytery meetings in the two centres of Melbourne and Geelong. The time had arrived for affording greater facilities for members to attend to the business of the Church by a division of labour. Accordingly the Synod divided the Church into four instead of two Presbyteries. It was arranged

that the ministers and congregations of Castlemaine, Maldon, Kyneton, and Sandhurst should be formed into a new Presbytery, to hold their first meeting at Sandhurst on 22nd December, and to be called the Presbytery of Castlemaine.

At the same time it was agreed that the ministers and congregations of Buninyong, Ballaarat, Lake Learmonth, and Lexton should be instituted a new Presbytery, the first meeting to be held on the 20th December at Ballaarat, and to be called the Presbytery of Ballaarat.

On 2nd February, 1859, Rev. John M. Strongman made application to be received into connection with the Synod. Mr. Strongman had been pastor of a Church in Ballaarat, in connection with the Congregational body. He had become dissatisfied with Congregationalism, and after deliberation and inquiry, he was prepared to sign the formula of the Presbyterian Church. He had been ordained in England by the laying on of the hands of the brethren, and had been appointed by the Colonial Missionary Society to do mission work in Australia. The Presbytery of Ballaarat had considered his application, and had recommended that he should be received into full standing as a minister of this Church. At a subsequent meeting he was admitted into ministerial fellowship. Mr. Strongman, for many years, did much pulpit work in the Presbyterian Church, and his services were highly acceptable, but he never assumed a distinct pastorate.

These seven years of past history bring us near to the consummation of the long-projected Union. That all-important event had been arranged by the various contracting parties to be carried into effect on the 7th April. Our object in this chapter has been to trace, in order of time, the accessions made to the ministry and the congregations formed during the preceding septennial period in the experience of the Free Church. It remains that we bring up the events in the history of the United Presbyterian Church to the same point.

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—1852–1858.

This Denomination made remarkable progress during the first few years of its Colonial existence. In the beginning of 1852, only five years had elapsed from the time that the Rev. Mr. Ramsay, the pioneer, had set his foot on the shores of Port Phillip. Within two years after the Synod was formed by the four uniting brethren, in January, 1850, there were a larger number of ministers than in either of the other Denominations. These four, of course, were at first absorbed with the efforts necessary for personal settlement, and yet there were no fewer than eleven ministers, in January, 1852, in fellowship with one another, while the Free Church, six years old, at the same point of time had six, and the Melbourne Presbytery of the Synod of Australia, thirteen years old, had five, including Rev. J. Clow. There were, no doubt, special circumstances which favoured the increase of the United Presbyterians. It was not on account of any peculiar sagacity, superior administration, or personal energy which characterized the founders which accounted for the remarkable growth of the body within a period so short. There can be no question that the principle of acting independently of Government aid, which prominently distinguished this Denomination, had not a little to do with its popularity.

The great distinctions among the three sections of Presbyterians which strangers have so much difficulty in understanding may be thus roughly epitomized. The Free Church are voluntaries in practice; the United Presbyterians are voluntaries both in theory and in practice; and those who represent the Established Church of Scotland are voluntaries neither in theory nor in practice. The influence of Dr. Lang in his tour of agitation, both at Home and in the Colony, in favour of voluntaryism for the maintenance and spread of Christianity, had, through his personal popularity, doubtless, given the voluntary Church a favourable aspect in the eyes of the community, and had also impelled a number of the ministers at Home to emigrate.

Still further to explain the rapid increase in numbers, it may be mentioned that through the favour in which the voluntary principle was held, several of the eleven referred to had been educated members of the Free Church, but, from one cause and another, preferred the purely voluntary platform. Another had been a well-trained Congregationalist, and, of course, a disciplined voluntary. It has been supposed by some that the Rev. Mr. Ramsay had either brought out with him a number of ministers, or by personal influence and effort had secured that they should soon follow. So far from this, the only minister who was his fellow-passenger was Rev. William Ritchie, formerly of West Linton, Scotland, but who,

instead of settling in Victoria, elected to proceed to New South Wales. And there is not known one case in which he induced, by direct influence or counsel, any minister to emigrate.

It has been even affirmed that "he brought out, principally from the Relief Church, no less than nine ministers, whom he settled in prominent places in the colony." This statement has been made on altogether mistaken grounds. It may have been intended as complimentary to Mr. Ramsay's enterprise and sagacity. But, in spite of the compliment, the facts lie altogether in another direction. Of the whole ten ministers associated with him in 1851 there were eight who had not known him personally till they made his acquaintance in Melbourne, and who previously had no correspondence with him. The other two came out on independent grounds. Besides, Mr. Ramsay had no resources out of which he could give any emigrating minister the slightest hope of getting his expenses paid. Then his hands after arrival were full of engrossing work, and it was not till March, 1851, that he could open his new place of worship. There can be no doubt, of course, that after Synod operations had fairly begun, and ministers on the field were settled, plans were arranged for securing, if possible, a regular supply of ministerial helps from Home. The population was rapidly increasing. In many places there were appeals from people, long and loud, for the privileges of stated worship. It was exceedingly painful to hear the cries and yet have no power to answer them. The brethren could only stretch out their hands to the parent Church in Scotland and say, "Come over and help us." This appeal was made, not by any individual member of Synod, but by the deliberate counsel of the whole. No hint was given as to whether a minister from the Relief or from the United Secession side of the House would be the more acceptable. The Union of these two sections of the voluntary Church in Scotland was consummated in 1847, the year of Mr. Ramsay's arrival in the Colony. This distinction between Relief and Secession then ceased. In point of fact, out of the ten ministers associated with Mr. Ramsay in 1851, there were only two who had been in connection with the Relief.

It requires also to be noticed that, notwithstanding all the written and printed correspondence that took place between the Colonial and the Scotch Synods of the United Presbyterian Church, the results were small and disappointing. The information sent Home respecting the spiritual wants of the Colony was minute and full, the calls for ministerial help were numerous and urgent, but the response to all appearance was cold and apathetic. The experience of the United Presbyterians in the Colony was not better than that of the Synod of Australia and that of the Free Church. They were all simultaneously pressing their suit most earnestly at headquarters for missionary agents to be sent to co-operate with them. But at Home they seemed to be all engrossed with more important questions affecting their own interests. It was well known that the Established Church, and her vigorous off-shoot the Free Church, had indeed their hands full of absorbing work a good few years before

and after the Disruption in 1843. But there was not the same excuse for the United Presbyterians. They were all in peace, and in the full possession of the spiritual luxuries arising from the recently consummated Union. They had all the enjoyment of a harmonious embrace, while the other two bodies had all the pain of a tearing asunder one from the other.

So far from the United Presbyterians faring better in their appeals than the other sections in the Colony, they fared worse. It was not the success resulting from urgent cries that secured these ten preachers to the voluntary standard previous to 1852. It must be admitted that the liberality of the Synod in Scotland had been cordially displayed on behalf of some of these ten brethren. They listened attentively, and responded kindly, to genuine applications made to them for assistance by intending emigrants. But this was chiefly before, not so much after, the gold-discovery. It was well known that while the members of the Mission Board might be favourable to sending ministers to Victoria, yet the secretary, the Rev. Dr. Somerville, did not look with favour on the Australian mission. His mind was engrossed with his favourite mission to Calabar. And his influence, both from his spirit and from his position, was not inconsiderable.

From whatever cause, the ministerial supplies for the next seven years—till the Union—were few and fitful, irregular and scant. Nor would we blame the brethren at Home altogether. It must be acknowledged that by the inharmonious and divided action of the brethren in the Colony in 1856 and after, the brethren at Home had ample grounds for discouragement. At the same time, it should be remembered that there were no divisions during the three or four years immediately succeeding the discovery of gold. These were the most important years for rush of population and excitement on account of the gold. At this period the necessities of the Colony, in regard to spiritual provision, were most urgent. The brethren on the field, although more numerous than those of the other sections, were scattered over a great expanse of country, and could not conveniently meet often in any number to concentrate their deliberations and efforts for advancing the cause of Christ in the land.

These three years after the gold-discovery were indeed the golden opportunity for the Home Synod to have sent out a few able and experienced ministers, had there been only a spirit of unprejudiced, far-seeing, and liberal Christian enterprise. Then the large staff of men—a considerable number of them inexperienced—at work in the Colony would have received encouragement and an impulse to advancement which at no subsequent time could be so effectively supplied. Whereas during the early years of their settlement, instead of cheering help from Home, the brethren in the Colony were all absorbed with earnest struggles to secure a stable footing in the midst of the quicksands of social change. It did not seem practicable to form a fund out of which emigrating ministers might have been assisted with passage-money. Australia, for a number of years after the opening up of the goldfields, could be rightly treated

by the Churches at Home only as a mission field. It could not be possible, especially for a voluntary Church in the Colony, to acquire a position of solid prosperity as a whole, except after the lapse of a considerable time. On the other hand, the parent Church in Scotland, being purely voluntary, let them have been ever so hearty in their sympathy with the weak and struggling body in Victoria, had not the resources of the other two sections. These had both numbers, wealth, and rank, and the young section had enthusiasm, and, wonderful to tell, in spite of the great gulf to be filled up, an overflowing exchequer. It became, therefore, the inevitable lot of the United Presbyterian Church in the Colony during the next seven years—while making respectable progress, all things considered—not to realize the full prosperity which their early success might have encouraged us to expect.

But we must now resume proceedings from the beginning of 1852.

Rev. R. Hamilton, after his return to town from his mission to the goldfields, found that the Church property at the corner of Napier and Gertrude streets was for sale. The property was secured and was held in trust by three members of the body, to become the property of the congregation to be formed in connection with the Synod. On the 5th February, 1852, a report of the transaction was laid before the Melbourne Presbytery, and Mr. Hamilton was duly appointed to occupy the place of worship, manse, and garden, and undertake the work of forming and organizing a congregation. The Church was formally opened for divine service on 22nd February, 1852.

There were now three United Presbyterian congregations in the town. In a few months the Napier-street Church was organized, a Sabbath-school formed, and the usual machinery put in full working order.

On 13th November, 1871, the foundation stone of a new Church was laid in the same locality (Napier-street), further North, in a quieter position. The new and handsome edifice was opened on 21st April, 1872, and the old building was abandoned.

In November, 1872, Mr. Hamilton was appointed by the Assembly to the convenership of the Chinese and Aborigines Committee. There was only one agent, and he was leaving for China. In 1873 he obtained the cordial sanction of the Assembly for the formation of a Chinese Class, to be instructed through an interpreter in the doctrines of the gospel, and to be trained for mission work. About half-a-dozen well recommended converts were accordingly brought together in Fitzroy, a course of Bible study was begun and carried on for about three years, and then they were settled in the various centres of the Chinese population. The agents, for many years after, continued to give great satisfaction in their work.

In 1877 he resigned the convenership. The duties of the class and the work which he had assumed of reducing and, if possible, removing a heavy burden of debt which rested on the mission, in addition to all his pastoral engagements, had told severely on his health.

In 1883 he resigned his charge of the Napier-street congregation, Fitzroy. After a lengthened ministry of forty-four years, thirty-two of which had been spent in the one charge in Fitzroy, it seemed proper to seek retirement before his health was altogether broken down. The Assembly assigned to him the status of minister *emeritus*. In 1888 the University of St. Andrew's, Scotland, conferred on him the honorary title of Doctor of Divinity.

In the course of his ministry he had occasion to visit a number of remarkable death-beds. At the earnest request of friends, he was led to publish a variety of memoirs and sermons preached in connection with the endeavour to improve, for the benefit of survivors, the testimony and the happy experiences of the departed. The most striking of these cases was the lengthened dying testimony in favour of gospel truth of a working mason—Charles Jardine Don, ex-M.L.A.—who for many years had held public debates at Home against Christianity, who became a member of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, and who, when health failed, worldly renown was gone, and death and eternity were at hand, betook himself to the only refuge in Christ Jesus. There were also printed, chiefly for private circulation, Memoirs and Sketches of two ministers—Rev. J. Ritchie Dalrymple and Rev. A. M. Ramsay—of Mrs. M'Nicol, of Miss B., and of Mrs. M. He also published a small volume in London, entitled "Days of Judgment and Years of Peace," 2nd edition.

On 4th May, 1853, the Rev. James Ritchie Dalrymple, who arrived in April, appeared before the Melbourne Presbytery, asking admission into the United Presbyterian body. His credentials were most satisfactory. He had been licensed by the Edinburgh Presbytery of the United Secession Church in 1836. Within a short probationary career, he was called to the pastorate of the Thornliebank congregation, which was in connection with the Glasgow Presbytery. He was ordained in April, 1837. After eight years' successful ministerial work, he became deeply impressed with the duty of devoting himself to labour in a foreign field. Accordingly, towards the end of 1845, he laid on the Presbytery's table the demission of his charge, with a view to the service of the Church in Canada, under the Committee of Foreign Missions. Having officiated for some time in vacant charges in this Colonial field, out of three competing calls he elected to be settled in Hamilton, Canada West. Here he was regularly inducted in November, 1847.

After labouring three years with great acceptance, he found that the state of his health constrained him again to seek, at the hands of the Presbytery, to be released from his charge, with a view to his returning to his native land. Having recovered from the severe effects of the Canadian climate, after a residence at Home of about two years, 1851-1852, he felt his strong desire renewed to be still employed in a distant field. Australia was the object of his choice, from its temperate clime, its rising importance as a gold country, and its being recognized by the Home Synod as a field of missionary

operation. The Mission Secretary of the United Presbyterian Church testified regarding him in these terms—"I have personally known Mr. Dalrymple for several years, and I have a high and favourable opinion of his talents, attainments, and unblemished character, and I believe that wherever it is his lot to labour in the service of his Divine Master, he will prove a devoted, acceptable, and useful minister of the gospel of Christ."

In regard to the most suitable field of labour for him, the Melbourne Presbytery felt it a difficult matter to advise. The Great Head of the Church marked out for him his sphere. The Rev. Lachlan M'Gillivray, minister of Warrnambool and district, for various reasons, was taking steps with a view to resigning his post, leaving the Colony, and returning to Scotland. The pulpit there became vacant. Mr. Dalrymple visited the place in answer to a special request laid on the table of the Melbourne Presbytery, from Warrnambool, at their meeting on 1st June. The Presbytery then appointed him to repair to that important centre of influence in the west.

The result was his permanent settlement here by due Presbyterial appointment. He occupied for several years three stations, about a half-a-dozen miles apart from each other. These were Warrnambool, Woodford, and Tower Hill. Among these he divided his labours by a suitable arrangement. He soon gathered good congregations that were warmly attached to his ministry. His ministerial charge, indeed, became the most important in the whole Western District. He remained unencumbered by any family relation. He was an earnest student, and always came to the pulpit well prepared with the results of faithful application. His abilities displayed in his work commanded the esteem of all his hearers, while his upright and blameless character secured the high respect of the general community.

It was while engaged in the faithful discharge of duty, while riding from Tower Hill on the Lord's day, that he was subjected to a sunstroke. This laid the foundation of the ailment which, within about two years after, terminated his life. After 1856 his health became so seriously impaired that he felt the necessity of giving up altogether the Tower Hill station. His debility and prostration continued to increase till June, 1858. So devoted and conscientious was he in his Master's service, that he persisted in preaching and dispensing the communion when he was within about ten days of his decease. On the 1st July, 1858, he died, according to medical testimony, of "chronic inflammation of the brain, with softening of its substance." Having been removed to Melbourne for skilled attentions, and having breathed his last there, his remains were committed to their resting-place in the cemetery of the metropolis, awaiting the resurrection to life eternal.

In proceeding to relate the next accessions to the ministry of the United Presbyterian Church, it is necessary to notice that the brethren in the Colony did not receive even one additional fellow-

labourer during the whole of 1852. Not only so, the whole of 1853, and even 1854, passed with the arrival of only one minister. No response had been received from the Mission Board, Edinburgh, to the appeals that had been sent, which pointed out in detail the places that were in urgent want of stated ordinances. It was not till 1854 had expired that any announcement came to relieve despondency, and to throw a ray of light on the future. It was altogether different with the other sections of the Presbyterian Church. The Synod of Australia, afterwards of Victoria, during the three most important years ending December, 1854, received an accession of no fewer than twelve ordained ministers, all, excepting two, from the North of Ireland. During the two years 1853 and 1854, the Free Church received an addition of twelve ministers, all from Scotland. Two of these were men of experience, learning, and distinction. The United Presbyterian Church, having received only one during the same three years, became to some extent overshadowed. The large increase which they received to their numbers in 1850 and 1851, doubtless gave them a firm foundation, but should the present dearth continue, they must soon fall into the background.

The brethren, therefore, felt the necessity of rousing their efforts to convince the Mission Board in Edinburgh of their earnest desire to receive additional labourers to enable them to meet the crying necessities of the people in various localities. The most effective method of proving earnestness was by a Bank draft. Accordingly they made a vigorous push to collect money among the different forming congregations, to be remitted to the Edinburgh Committee. The Churches, it is true, were all in an initiatory stage, and struggling with debt and difficulty. Not one of them had as yet had time to be clear of burdens, and to have their hands free to afford any liberal assistance in a general undertaking. No place of worship was other than in a temporary and half-finished state. Very few manses were built. Pecuniary burdens were everywhere pressing. Society was all in a seething state, and members of congregations were struggling with personal and family necessities. Still, with all the obstacles in view, the resolution was formed to go forward with the work. The result of the effort was that on the 27th May, 1854, a draft on the Bank for £300 was sent to the Secretary of the Mission Board, Edinburgh, to assist in the passage and outfit of emigrating ministers.

It was, possibly, a mistake to send so much of the money at once. The brethren at Home could hardly realize to what a large extent the field had been pre-occupied by the twenty-four brethren belonging to the other two Presbyterian sections. Neither could it be easily understood, at so great a distance from the spot, how limited the field was for ministerial occupation. It is true, population was rapidly increasing. But at the beginning of 1852 there were only 97,489 in the entire Colony, and at the end of 1854 there were 312,307. At the same time the Presbyterian ministers had been undergoing a corresponding expansion. Hence, at the period last mentioned, there would be about forty-four Presbyterian ministers

in the Colony, and of these there were only nine United Presbyterians in active service, one having returned Home, another having become journalist, and a third having turned to teaching. The Presbyterian population, therefore, might be considered to be pretty fully supplied with gospel ordinances, according to the usual calculation of one minister to about 1,000 people.

It appeared as if the Mission Board, upon receipt of the money remitted, had without delay set about finding ministers who were willing to emigrate. Conscious, apparently, of remissness in the past, they made all haste to make amends. They resolved on sending at once as many as the money remitted would enable them to send. They would select ministers, as much as possible, distinguished for their abilities. The wiser plan would have been to send one or two, at the very most, at once, and to wait for fresh instructions from the Colony before sending more.

However, in the month of January, 1855, a communication was received from the Secretary of the Mission Board, Edinburgh, to the effect that the Rev. James Ballantyne and the Rev. A. D. Kinimmont had been appointed to Victoria, and were expected to sail in the *James Baines* in the middle of December. Besides these, the brethren might expect one or two more to follow. This was exceedingly cheering intelligence to the Presbytery at their meeting, 7th February, after the three years of almost uninterrupted gloom. The difficulty, at the same time, could hardly fail to be apprehended how to dispose satisfactorily of the services of these gifted brethren. Meanwhile, the uppermost feeling in the Presbytery was that of joy and thankfulness to God for the intelligence received. When the difficulties should actually arise, it would then be time to grapple with them.

At length, on 12th February, 1855, the two brethren whose mission had been heralded arrived in the Bay with their wives and families. Unexpectedly there was a third, in the person of Rev. John Ballantyne, brother of James. On the 7th March they were introduced to the Presbytery. Official documents from the Edinburgh Presbytery and Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church showed that the Rev. James Ballantyne had been minister of the Arthur-street United Presbyterian congregation, Edinburgh ; that the Rev. Alex. D. Kinimmont had been minister of the Kirkgate United Presbyterian congregation, Leith ; and that the Mission Board had accepted these brethren and sent them out to join the brethren of the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria. They were highly recommended for their talents, experience, and usefulness in their former spheres of labour, and were warmly commended to the fraternal regard and co-operation of the brethren in the Colony.

Rev. John Ballantyne presented Presbyterial certificates, testifying to his having been a licensed preacher and ordained minister of the United Presbyterian Church, that he had been settled pastor of the congregation of Lilliesleaf, near Melrose, Scotland, and that he

was separated from his charge in full ministerial standing, and in the possession of the high appreciation of his personal character and ministerial gifts and qualifications, on the part of the Melrose Presbytery.

The Presbytery hailed the arrival of these brethren with lively joy and cordial gratitude to God, rejoicing in the accession at length afforded to their number and influence, and agreed to record their readiness to the best of their ability to promote the comfort and usefulness of the brethren in their occupation of spheres of labour in the Colony.

In the gracious Providence of God, no sooner did these brethren make their appearance than there seemed to be openings presenting themselves which could more than absorb the services of them all. Geelong was vacant, Gisborne was unsupplied, a movement was going on in Emerald Hill with a view to a ministerial settlement, and numbers were eagerly clamouring for the stated services of one or other of the brethren. Meanwhile, arrangements were made for distributing their ministrations among the different localities in want of settlement. In addition to all, the pioneer Church of the Synod, in Collins-street, had met and deliberated, and had come to a resolution to petition the Presbytery to moderate in a call, with a view to obtaining a colleague to labour in conjunction with the Rev. A. M. Ramsay, their present pastor. This movement having the full consent of the minister, the Presbytery at once agreed to arrange so as to give the congregation an opportunity of making their choice.

On the 4th April, 1855, Rev. Hugh Darling appeared before the Presbytery, and asked admission into the United Presbyterian Synod. He presented official papers from both Presbytery and Mission Board. He had been the ordained minister of Stitshill congregation, near Kelso, in the South of Scotland. He was duly separated from his charge in full standing, and with the high confidence and esteem of his brethren in the ministry. The Mission Board accepted him as an emigrant minister, and appointed him to join the fellowship of the United Presbyterian Church in Victoria, warmly commending him to the encouragement, support, and affection of the Christian friends in the Colony.

The Presbytery were greatly delighted and devoutly thankful for the arrival of Mr. Darling so soon after the other brethren.

These four brethren were invited to sit in the Presbytery as corresponding or deliberative members.

At this meeting of Presbytery it was reported, as the result of the moderation in Collins-street congregation, on 1st inst., that Rev. James Ballantyne was elected by a majority to be colleague to Rev. A. M. Ramsay. Mr. Ballantyne accepted the call, and was duly inducted on the evening of 17th April. The induction was somewhat marred through a number of the leading members of the congregation, who were in the minority at the election, having sent a letter to the Presbytery expressing a desire that their names should be withdrawn from the call.

The effect of the secession from the Collins-street cause, on the

part of influential members, was highly injurious. The prosperity of the congregation, in consequence, did not advance as was expected. The revenue did not reach the required figure. It became evident that its resources were not equal to the maintenance of two ministers. The Presbyterian population of Melbourne was by this time amply provided for, by the influx of ministers, and by the increase of congregations, during the few years preceding the arrival of the four United Presbyterian brethren. And considering that voluntary Presbyterians were a minority in the community, and that in virtue of their self-dependent principles they were placed financially at a comparatively great disadvantage, it need not be surprising that there should not have been at this stage a sufficient number of United Presbyterians in the city and immediate suburbs to support no fewer than six if not seven ministers. All wished a settlement in or about the city, and who would have objected, if such location had been reasonable and practicable?

The inadequate revenue of the Collins-street congregation brought matters sooner than might have been expected to a crisis. The question forced itself, within one year and six months of the collegiate settlement, to a decision, whether one of the colleagues should not retire, and, if so, which? It was agreed to refer the matter, under the direction of the Presbytery, to a vote of the congregation. The appeal was made on 21st September, 1856. The result was another division of the congregation. Rev. James Ballantyne and his friends of the Collins-street Church retired to form another separate congregation. They soon entered into alliance with the Lonsdale-street congregation, the Rev. William Jarrett agreeing to retire from the pastorate.

Meanwhile Rev. A. D. Kininmont, recently arrived, and Rev. D. Chapman are announced in "Bradshaw" as having formed a Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Mr. Chapman simply communicated, as if the previous connection had been a matter of form, to the Presbytery, on 1st October, 1856, that his connection, and that of his congregation, with the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria had ceased. Now, it was just one peal of thunder after another. Rev. James Ballantyne, Rev. John Ballantyne, of Emerald Hill (his brother), and Rev. John Cooper announced to the Presbytery, at their meeting on 7th October, 1857, that they had constituted themselves the Synod of Australia.

The recent rejoicing of the Presbytery over the arrival of so many able and talented ministers was turned into wailing. Such has been the constant experience of the Church from the beginning. It was good seed that was sown—whence, then, the tares? An enemy hath done this; but let both grow together till the harvest. The evils that spring up within the Church are exceedingly trying and embarrassing, but in dealing with them the utmost patience, prudence, and prayer must be exercised. In due time, light often comes out of darkness, order out of confusion, yea union out of division, and harmony out of conflict. The Lord of the Church still doeth wondrously, as in days of old.

From the period of separation from the Synod in October, and his entering on the Lonsdale-street charge towards the end of 1856, the Rev. James Ballantyne continued to officiate for a number of years in the same place, till after the union of 1859. After the experience acquired in this locality, the congregation deemed it advisable to make a change. An effort was made by the people, who were not voluntaries of so rigid a type as their minister had been, to obtain a Government site in a more suitable part of the town. Accordingly a large allotment was got in Rathdown-street, at the north-west corner of Carlton Gardens. The old place, a large stone building in Lonsdale-street, was disposed of, and a temporary place of worship was erected on the new site. This was replaced by a handsome stone and brick building, with spire, which was opened in 1874. In consequence, partly, of attacks of ill-health, after returning from a trip home, where, on behalf of the congregation, he attempted, without success, to obtain a colleague and successor, he resigned his pastoral charge. The resignation took effect 2nd July, 1877.

Since his separation from pastoral work he has done good service in conducting public worship regularly on behalf of a forming congregation in Oakleigh. He has held the onerous post of Clerk to the Melbourne Presbytery, and has distinguished himself by his knowledge of Church forms and his ability in the faithful record of business. His talents are of a superior order, and he has frequently taken effective part in matters under discussion in the Church Courts. On various occasions he has done good service in editing the Church periodical. Since January, 1886, he has conducted the *Presbyterian Monthly and Messenger* with marked ability and success.

On the 4th April, 1855, Rev. John Ballantyne was appointed to take charge of the forming congregation in Emerald Hill. Within two months a Church of sixty certificated members was formed, a unanimous call in his favour was presented on 4th July, and he was duly inducted on the 26th. Here his labours for a good many years were prosecuted with a considerable measure of success. His congregation became stable and prosperous. He was a man of great force of character, and had much vigour both of body and mind. His talents were highly respectable, and he secured the esteem of all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. His people held him in high respect, and were much attached, on account of his high personal qualities as a man and his devotedness to their spiritual interests as a pastor. After labouring with much success for a lengthened period he fell into bad health, continued a considerable time in impaired vigour, became altogether unfit for duty, and at last died at Edinburgh, on 4th October, 1860.

On 4th April, 1855, the same day that Rev. Hugh Darling was introduced to the Presbytery, a deputation from North Melbourne appeared and presented a petition from a number of Presbyterians,

soliciting a supply of gospel ordinances in that thriving suburb. Mr. Darling was willing to accept an allocation to that field. The Presbytery, therefore, appointed him. On 17th April, it was found that a call had issued from Geelong in favour of Mr. Darling, the call having been numerously signed and a good stipend promised. He took time to consider, and on 2nd May he declined.

As an illustration of the maxim that "the unexpected always happens," the report was brought to the Presbytery that Mr. Darling had left North Melbourne for Sydney. It appeared that he had not been altogether satisfied with his prospects in Victoria. He obtained a charge in Sydney, and laboured there for a number of years with some measure of success. At length, after the decease of the Rev. John Ballantyne, the congregation of Emerald Hill gave him a call He accepted, and was inducted to his charge on 29th April, 1861. He persevered in his work, maintaining his position with considerable efficiency, till his health gave way, and he was under the necessity of retiring from public service. He died at Kew on 2nd December, 1877.

On 17th April, 1855, information was conveyed to the Presbytery that Rev. A. D. Kininmont had resolved on commencing a new cause in East Melbourne. It appeared that, not being disposed to settle anywhere out of Melbourne, on consulting with friends who promised to adhere to his ministry, he secured the use of the schoolroom in Albert-street, East Melbourne, where the Rev. T. Heron had attempted to form a congregation. After labouring for a short time here, he left and went into the Protestant Hall. He was then invited to supply the pulpit of the Scots-Church for some time, while the minister was absent on leave on account of illness. This interruption to his work in East Melbourne was not in his favour as to success on resuming his stated duties. Meanwhile, he declined an urgent call from Adelaide. His separation from the Presbytery and his isolated position could not have been altogether conducive to his best interests, especially as there were three United Presbyterian congregations, besides three others, all within easy distance. It was thought that another position, more central, might be favourable for the object they had in view. Accordingly, a new site was purchased at a high figure in Mackenzie-street, off Victoria-street. A temporary, but neat, erection was put up on the ground. Severe trials and family afflictions prompted an arrangement to return to Scotland. He and his family left in 1858. Having received a thorough recruiting to health and spirits, and not relishing particularly the cold and moist Scottish climate, they all returned to the Colony in 1861, full of life and brightness.

The old Synod of two members dropped out of sight, and he joined the united body. He soon received a call to the Union Church, North Melbourne, afterwards Hotham. He became Convener of the Home Mission Committee, and did good service to the Church. He was appointed by the Assembly Convener also of the Union Committee, to conduct negotiations with the outstanding United

Presbyterians who merged in the general body in 1870. After labouring for a good number of years with no small acceptance, his health completely broke down under a series of severe family afflictions. He found it necessary to suspend his labours for a while, and ultimately to retire altogether from the pastorate. His resignation was accepted 7th November, 1878. He lingered several years in a shattered condition of health, and when he rallied at times he studied to make himself useful among the Churches. At last he succumbed to the irresistible call of the last messenger on 19th May, 1881, at his private residence in Kew.

On 2nd May, 1855, Rev. John Cooper was introduced to the Presbytery. Mr. Cooper hailed as a United Presbyterian ordained minister from Scotland. He had resided, however, in America a short time before coming to the Colony. He was nearly related to the Messrs. Ballantyne. He presented documents which showed that he had been licensed by the United Associate Presbytery of Edinburgh. He had held the pastoral charge of the congregation of Johnshaven, Scotland. He was appointed to supply the vacant charge at Geelong.

On 15th August following, a call was presented to the Presbytery on behalf of Mr. Cooper. The call was signed by 83 members, and 56 adherents. The induction was carried into effect on 29th August. Mr. Cooper continued to labour with acceptance till May, 1857, when he sent a letter to the Presbytery resigning his charge. He was induced to hold his resignation in abeyance for a time, in the hope that matters outside the congregation, which troubled him, would be satisfactorily arranged. On 27th August, however, he wrote again, recalling the suspension of his demission. On the 1st November he called a meeting of the congregation to consider whether they would join the new Synod of Australia along with him, or remain as they were and lose him. On a dispute arising between him and the people, he solemnly resigned into their hands the pastoral charge of the congregation, and he was no longer their minister. The pulpit was vacant.

The next settlement Mr. Cooper had was after the Union in 1859, when he became the minister of Rokewood. After labouring some time here, he was transferred by call and induction to Pentridge, afterwards named Coburg. His settlement here was effected 20th June, 1866. Here he received Government appointment as chaplain to the prisoners in Pentridge. Mr. Cooper distinguished himself as a writer. The following is a list of his works:—1. "The Province of Law in the Fall and Recovery of Man;" 2. "The New Moral Creation;" 3. "Jesus Christ's Mode of Presenting Himself to the World;" 4. "Christian Evolution;" 5. "Truth in its own Light;" 6. "The Conflict Ended." Some criticisms have rated these productions very high, for their intellectual ability and their metaphysical grasp. He remained during a long period at his post in Coburg, when at length, after a severe attack of illness, he died in December, 1885.

On 5th December, 1855, Mr. Andrew Pringle was introduced to the Presbytery. He was found to be a licensed preacher of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. He had been resident in the Colony since 1850, and had been a member of the United Presbyterian congregation of Geelong. He had not applied to the Presbytery for employment in his sacred profession, on account of the low state of his health. His condition as to health was so precarious that he felt he could not entertain the idea of accepting a charge. Having recently received a little reviving of strength and spirits, he now offered his services to the Presbytery, that they might give him such temporary employment as he could undertake.

The Presbytery expressed gratification on hearing Mr. Pringle's request, and a cordial willingness to employ him in their vacancies and stations as he might be able to accept. And in order to his greater efficiency, the Presbytery proposed that he should be ordained. It was arranged that his ordination should take place on the following Sabbath afternoon, in the Lonsdale-street Church, Melbourne. On the 9th December, therefore, he was solemnly set apart to fulfil all the offices of the ministry as occasion might require. Mr. Pringle was appointed to supply at Gisborne, where he would have the opportunity of discharging all the functions of an ordained ministry. His health did not admit of his continuing his labours beyond April, 1856. In the beginning of 1857 he was able to resume his pulpit work for a time in the vacancy at Portland. He held office till May of the same year, when he was again obliged to retire. After some years of lingering decline, he at length fell asleep, and went to his reward.

On 2nd April, 1856, Mr. John M'Ilrea, from Ireland, applied for admission into ministerial connection. He had attended the Arts course three sessions in the Edinburgh University. He had studied for some time with a view to the ministry under the Lancashire Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church. He was employed in missionary work in England, and latterly in Sydney, under the Synod of New South Wales. He never obtained a settled charge.

On the 7th January, 1857, Rev. Francis Sherlock applied for admission into the membership of the Synod. He was formerly an Independent minister. He went through a full course of study at Homarton College, England, and he had received ordination at the hands of two Independent ministers. He had been residing at Geelong, and he was highly recommended by all of the Presbyterian ministers there. The application was allowed to lie over for consideration.

Meanwhile there was an urgent appeal from Newstead, and another from Ballaarat, for a supply of gospel services, while both Portland and Gisborne were vacant.

After three months' trial Mr. Sherlock was received and appointed to labour at Gisborne and minister to the congregation. On 6th May the Presbytery received a cheering communication

from him to the effect that he had begun ministerial work at Gisborne, that the cause had revived, and that the people were putting forth efforts to get their place of worship erected. Mr. Sherlock's services were continued from month to month till November, when the aspect of affairs became altogether changed. The cause was declining, and he sent a letter of resignation. His connection ceased.

On 6th May, 1857, a letter was read from Rev. William Ridley, B.A., from New South Wales, then in Victoria on a visit, asking admission into the body. He had been ordained to the office of the Christian ministry by the Synod of New South Wales on 10th April, 1850. He would present, as soon as possible, a certificate from the University of London, 1839, of the degree of B.A., also a certificate of ministerial standing, and one of disjunction from the N.S.W. Synod. He was also an M.A. of Sydney.

Shortly before his arrival, there was received from Portland an earnest appeal for ministerial supply. Brethren, knowing the urgency, advised Mr. Ridley at once to repair to Portland, give them supply for the present, and wait results. The prospect of Mr. Ridley's accession to the Denomination was eminently satisfactory and gratifying. He had distinguished himself as a scholar, his character was unblemished, and his ministerial experience was considerable. All parties felt that the settlement of Mr. Ridley in Portland was, according to the indications of Providence, as good as accomplished.

On 5th June, Mr. Ridley presented the requisite certificates, and the Presbytery cordially received him into full standing as a member of Synod. At the same meeting, a call was laid on the table from the Portland congregation, in favour of Rev. W. Ridley, signed by 49 members and 35 adherents. The call was accepted, and the induction took place at Portland on the 21st.

This settlement was a very happy one. Mr. Ridley was not only universally respected—he was beloved. His literary attainments were much above the average. His discourses were instructive and edifying. He was a Nathaniel in disposition. His demeanour was upright, mild, and amiable. He was an eminent linguist. While he was engaged as a missionary among the aborigines in New South Wales, he made the aboriginal tongue a subject of such earnest scientific study that he afterwards published the results of his investigation. His work has always been regarded as an authority on the grammatical construction of the language of the aboriginal tribes. Nor was it altogether a pastime with him to study linguistic lore. In proof of this, what could more effectually illustrate at once his scientific talent and his genuine missionary spirit than the following incident:—While engaged in his usual work among the aborigines, in course of his visitations he fell in with a poor Highland woman who could not speak a word of English, and to whom he found it impossible to convey a single idea of the salvation of the gospel. Animated by a burning desire to be able to make known

to this solitary woman—whose ideas were all confined within the limits of her mother-tongue—the Gospel of Christ, he could not rest till he acquired such a knowledge of the Gaelic as enabled him to explain to her God's plan of redeeming love.

Notwithstanding Mr. Ridley's superior character and attainments, and in spite of his eminent usefulness in the town and district, his ministry in the locality was not particularly lengthened. In the inscrutable Providence of God, and even contrary to his own inclinations and earnest desires, Mr. Ridley felt it to be necessary to demit his charge, after only a comparatively few years' labours. His wife and family, it appeared, were under a necessity, for the sake of health, to reside in Sydney, and no reasoning could induce him to live separate from those to whom he was bound by the strongest natural ties. He resigned connection with the Victorian Church in June, 1858. His congregation deeply regretted his retirement and gave him a handsome present.

He never again assumed a pastoral charge. He obtained employment in connection with the daily Press of Sydney, and persevered at this work till his decease. It is interesting to know that shortly before his death he accepted an appointment to become Missionary to the Chinese in Sydney. He began the study of the language, but was somewhat suddenly arrested by fatal illness. He departed this life on 26th September, 1878.

On 15th August, 1857, the Rev. John Reid and fourteen members of the North Melbourne Presbyterian congregation appeared before the Presbytery, and craved admission into the United Presbyterian Denomination. Mr. Reid's relation to the Synod of Victoria and the Presbytery of Melbourne had not been quite satisfactory. He held strong views on the subject of the indiscriminate endowment of truth and error by the Colonial Government, and he did not hesitate to speak his mind on the subject on the platform as well as in the Presbytery. And now the disagreement had culminated in separation. It seemed a sad thing, in the midst of most earnest endeavours on the part of the leading men of all sections of the Presbyterian Church to bring about a general and, if possible, an all-embracing Union, to see the spirit of separation on all sides asserting itself in opposition to this grand object.

The Melbourne Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church were placed somewhat in a dilemma by this application. Were they to encourage disunion in a sister Church with which they were seeking themselves to be amalgamated? It was agreed to communicate with the Melbourne Presbytery of the Synod of Victoria, apprising them of Mr. Reid's application, and asking them somewhat awkwardly if they would consider the United Presbyterians wanting in respect if they should see it to be their duty to admit Mr. Reid and his friends into fellowship. In this delicate piece of diplomacy, the reply was characteristic. They would leave the United Presbyterians to judge for themselves in the matter. The application was referred to the decision of the Synod, to make the responsibility as

wide as possible. The Synod's resolution was in favour of reception, one reason being that in the general Union that was to appearance hastening apace, the dissentients would soon be carried back, and be absorbed in the grand total.

On 16th November it was reported to the Presbytery that at the recent meeting of Synod the Rev. John Reid, and his congregation, said to amount to about 250 persons, had been received into fellowship. After occupying a temporary place of worship, and labouring for about a year, he received a call to Sydney. There he held on doing ministerial work, and specially interested himself in the spiritual welfare of seamen for many years. At last he rested from his labours.

In March, 1858, Mr. John Meek made his appearance in the Colony, and came before the Presbytery in April, making application to be employed in mission or evangelistic work. He brought high recommendations from the minister and elders of the United Presbyterian congregation, Nicholson-street, Edinburgh. He had been employed in mission work for a good few years in connection with that Church, and had given the highest satisfaction as a faithful, devoted, and successful worker in the cause of Christ. He was well educated, his addresses displayed excellent abilities, and his retirement from work in Edinburgh, solely for reasons of health, was greatly regretted. He was warmly commended to the confidence and esteem of the brethren in the Colony. The Presbytery received him with great cordiality, and appointed him to do evangelistic work at Gisborne.

As Mr. Meek was desirous of prosecuting his studies with a view to the ministry, the Presbytery arranged to put him under a course of training. He entered on his work at Gisborne, and on his subjects of study, with great earnestness and success. After considerable experience of Mr. Meek's labours, the congregation were so highly satisfied that they resolved on having him ordained over them. The Presbytery, taking everything into account, and especially regarding the call of the congregation as the call of the Great Head of the Church, resolved on granting him the privileges both of license and ordination. The congregation were about to enter into the general Union, and in some respects it would have been disastrous to have postponed the settlement so strongly desired. Mr. Meek has proved himself ever since his settlement, during all these years of labour in the one charge, to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Under his faithful toils he has built up a stable and attached congregation. His health has been remarkably restored and sustained, and although he has regularly conducted three services each Lord's day—in Gisborne, Riddell's Creek, and Mount Macedon—for so long a period, his strength has never failed. He lives in the affections of his threefold charge, and is greatly esteemed among all his brethren and acquaintance.

It was in 1858 that the Rev. Hugh Sanderson Seaborne, an Inde-

pendent minister from England, made application to be received into the body. His credentials as an ordained minister were satisfactory. He had considerable experience in the work of the gospel ministry in England. But he preferred the settled system of Presbyterian order to Congregationalism, and was ready to subscribe to the Standards of the United Presbyterian Church. His testimonials bore evidence of his high talents and attainments as well as his popular gifts. His application was reserved for decision. He was afterwards admitted to the membership of the Synod. He was employed for some time in the different vacancies. He supplied some time in Warrnambool after the death of the minister, and his pulpit appearances showed marked ability, but he remained without a settled charge up to the time of the Union, in 1859. He joined the general body.

In the beginning of 1859 the Rev. Robert Thomson Walker arrived. A body of voluntary Presbyterians in Ballaarat had sent a call to Rev. Robert Thomson Walker, United Presbyterian minister in Dunfermline, Scotland. He accepted the invitation, and emigrated with his wife and family. He arrived in March, 1859, at Melbourne, and soon wended his way to his destined sphere of labour in the golden metropolis of the west. In 1861 he and his congregation applied for admission into connection with the Presbytery, and were cordially received under its supervision. Immediately after his arrival in 1859, the long-contemplated Union, with all its drawbacks, was on the eve of consummation. His sympathies were manifestly with the outstanding members of the United Presbyterian Synod. He could not with any propriety decide as to his Presbyterial connection till he had time to know the mind of his congregation, and had all the preliminary details of his settlement satisfactorily arranged. After prosecuting his work very successfully for over eight years, troubles arose, in consequence of which he retired from the old place of worship with a large minority of the congregation to worship in another part of the town. A reunion, however, after a number of years, was effected between him and his old congregation. In 1876 the two congregations became one. He occupied the Moderator's chair in 1874–5. At length, through age and infirmity, he retired from a pastoral charge. Having been ordained in 1837, he has survived so long as to have celebrated his ministerial jubilee. After his retirement he still continued to do varied service to the Church, and afterwards he retired to Echuca, where he took up his residence. The Assembly assigned to him the status of minister *emeritus*.

It may be recorded here that the above does not terminate the history of the United Presbyterian Church as a distinct Denomination. The events related so far bring us to the verge of the Union. But the historical United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria maintained its continuous existence for over ten years after the union. The United Presbyterian brethren who separated and assumed the

name of the Synod of Australia, embracing four ministers—two of them being detached—and two congregations, entered into the general Union. The United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, however, divided on the subject of Union. The question on which the division turned was the consistency or inconsistency of Union while State-aid continued. Those who held such union to be unconstitutional remained as they were under the old name, and resolved to maintain operations on the old lines. It so happened that they were in the minority in the division, but inasmuch as they were constitutionally right, and were simply seeking to maintain the fundamental and distinctive principles of the denominations, they were entitled to hold by the original name, and to sustain the continuous identity of the body. Although differing so materially in their action from their brethren, they had no intention of following out to extremes the legal demands which they might have asserted.

It never entered into the minds of the derelict United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria to disturb one or another of the separating congregations with legal process. It was perfectly evident that a complete Union of Presbyterians was not only right and scriptural in itself, but was a consummation which sooner or later would be accomplished. Their own hearts were set on Union as a binding duty resting on all Presbyterians. They were the first to move in the path of union, as early as 1852. And it only remained that they should wait patiently till every obstacle was removed out of the way, and they should be enabled to see eye to eye, and present a united body without a fragment of dissent.

At the date at which we have arrived, the beginning of 1859, the number of ministers in the three denominations was considerable. It would have been a happy thing if all could have seen their way to form a consolidated body. There were 15 ministers in the Synod of Victoria, who were all hearty for union. There were 28 in the Free Church Synod, but a minority would not unite. And there were 14 in the United Presbyterian Church, but a minority here, too, would not enter the Union at present.

CHAPTER VIII.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH A VIEW TO UNION—1852-1854.

The Union of the three bodies of Presbyterians in 1859, and its greater completeness at subsequent periods, is the most prominent event in the fifty years' history of Presbyterianism in Victoria. Considering the tenacity with which each section had been in the habit of maintaining its own distinctive peculiarities, the amalgamation of the whole into one large body must be regarded as one of the many marvels which enter into Victorian history. The difficulties which required to be overcome may be seen at a glance in the total failure of negotiations in order to Union between the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches in Scotland. These two sections of the Church of Christ stood precisely on the same platform as to voluntary practice, freedom from State connection, and entire dependence on the free-will offerings of the people for support, and yet, after years of conference, they could not take the decisive step. They were found to be in all essential points agreed—in Doctrine, Discipline, and Government. The only difference found between them was a theory, an opinion, or a notion respecting the Civil Magistrate's interference in religious matters. But the shadowy distinction spoke with a voice of power to those two large bodies, embracing so many talented, learned, and admirable Christian men, and gave forth the *fiat*, "Thus far shall ye come but no further." The Union could not become a fact.

It is true in the Colony we were somewhat differently situated. We had no State Church. We had State-endowments, but no State control. We breathed the air of freedom from all the evils of teinds and tithes, of forced settlements of ministers, and of a right hand of power ready to interfere at any moment with spiritual liberty. This antipodean country made a new departure, and the Colonial Government would not go further than lend a helping hand by grants of land and money, under regulations, for what was called—"The advancement of the Christian religion." Even this was by some felt to be a formidable obstacle to Union, and how to get it surmounted was the difficulty. The three Bodies were not all following a uniform practice in regard to either the acceptance or the rejection of State grants. One of the three received, the other two originally rejected, the gifts of Government. Indeed, a strong feeling had risen in the general community that bounties from the public Treasury conferred on religious bodies could not be disbursed on a right or scriptural principle, and therefore ought to cease altogether. It seemed a possible thing that this action of the State might lead in course of time to the ascendancy of a favoured Denomination, and to the consequent evils found to be so vexatious in the old country. A foregone conclusion appeared to have been

arrived at in the early history of the Colony, that no ascendancy of a particular Church, of whatever name or numbers, under the fostering wing of Government, should ever be tolerated in this new land. It was strongly felt that the one safe principle for legislation was that all sections of the Christian Church should be placed on a level, and no support be given to one or another. The only satisfactory foundation on which they should stand must be that of self-support and perfect freedom from State-help.

Meanwhile, however, there is a section of the Presbyterian Church in Victoria that believes in the duty of the Civil Power to give money from the State Treasury for the support and extension of Christ's kingdom. That section represents the Established Church of Scotland. Those who belong to this division of the Presbyterian body will not voluntarily renounce the emoluments which they can receive with a good conscience, and which the State can freely and legally bestow. Moreover, they stand in an intimate relation to the parent Church in Scotland, and it was in perfect harmony with the Constitution and principles of that State Church that the Colonial section, which is specially allied to her, should cordially accept all the benefits available from the Civil Legislature.

But how will the other two sections of Presbyterians, who reject all State-aid as unrighteous and wrong, ever entertain consistently the idea of union with those who regard that aid as right and proper, and who carry their principles into practice? Those two belong to a different ecclesiastical parentage. They have been trained in a different school. The one in practice, and the other in both theory and practice, have been in the habit of renouncing all Government help in the maintenance and extension of the gospel. The Free Church in the Colony sprang into existence from no arbitrary proceedings or unrighteous interference with liberty on the part of the Civil Power. On the contrary, Government smiled on all Churches having the Christian name, and, without any disposition to intermeddle with their spiritual privileges, was ready to lavish upon them the most liberal favours. Neither had the Colonial Free Church any quarrel with her brethren from whom she was pleased to separate. There had been no hot contentions, bitter controversies, or legal processes, forcing on a disruption of ties and interests.

The Victorian Free Church was begotten of sympathy with the Scottish parent, and a resolution to identify herself with the new organization at Home. She would approve of her strivings and sacrifices, adopt her principles, look to her for all ministerial supplies, and endeavour to be her faithful representative in this distant land. This thorough sympathy with the Disruption Church in Scotland led her to adopt, as a fundamental principle in her constitution, the renunciation of all State-support, whether in land or money, for the furtherance of her interests. She would accept the help of the secular power, provided there was no aid given at the same time to what she regarded as a system of error. And by a total renunciation of all State-gifts, she would all the more thoroughly prove her identity with the heroic Church of the fatherland.

The United Presbyterian Church, on the other hand, was the representative of a historic Church in Scotland. That Church had originated about a hundred years before the Scottish Disruption. It had its origin in oppressive acts of the General Assembly. Some ministers refused to have any hand in the settlement of pastors in parishes, where the congregations not only had no voice in the election, but strongly protested against the ordination or induction of the presentees, whose legal claims for emolument rested on patronage. They would not be parties to the forcing of unacceptable and, it might be, unworthy preachers on "reclaiming congregations." In cases of this kind, the Assembly would enjoin the reluctant and conscientious ministers, who sympathized with the people, to proceed with the settlement of the unwelcome presentees. And when they positively declined, they were treated as rebellious, and were deposed from the ministry. Part of this Church originated in 1740, through eight ministers having protested against the settlement of an incumbent in Kinross against the wishes of the congregation, and were in consequence deprived of their *status*. Another part sprung from a similar cause in 1752, when the Rev. Thomas Gillespie was deposed from his office as minister of Carnock. Both parties having risen to great influence in the kingdom in the course of a century, through the operation of purely voluntary efforts, were united in one body on 13th May, 1847, under the designation of the United Presbyterian Church.

The Church of this name in the Colony was planted as a true representative of the parent Church in Scotland. A feeling of thorough sympathy and identity of principle and interest belonged to the two. One special characteristic of this body in Scotland was the renunciation of Government-aid, the condemnation of patronage, and the advancement of the cause of Christ in the world only by the free contributions of the Christian people.

These, then, are the three Denominations which it is proposed to try at least to get united in one compact body. At first sight the difficulties seemed insurmountable. But, on mature consideration, there were points of view which encouraged hope. In this new land there seemed, ecclesiastically as well as physically, a more free air in which to breathe. The recollections and associations of Home could not be altogether and all at once set aside. But why should the rivalries and controversies of the old country be imported into the new? Prejudices and alienations need not be perpetuated in a land where the surroundings are so entirely different, and the Church-life, as well as the national, is starting on new lines. As to the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches, why should they look askance on each other? Are they not identical in their Church Standards, with one non-essential and easily-managed exception? Are they not alike in practical operations? In regard to the third section, which clings to State-pay, is it not a settled point in the convictions of all thinking men that the Legislature will sooner or later effectually remove the obstruction by the abolition of all grants for religious purposes? And, although it may seem altogether

impracticable in the meantime to entertain the idea of Union, where both theory and practice are so completely opposed to each other, yet who knows how soon the path to amalgamation may be opened up?

The first movement towards Union originated with the United Presbyterians. On the 30th April, 1851, their Synod appointed the formation of two Presbyteries, an eastern and a western. The one was the Melbourne, and the other the Portland, Presbytery. The former held their first meeting on 1st May, 1851; the latter held their first meeting on 1st December, 1851. The brethren in Portland, Rev. Messrs. T. E. Richardson and A. Ross, at their first meeting, agreed on an overture to the Synod—"To take immediate steps for ascertaining how far union with other Presbyterian Denominations is practicable, and, where practicable, to use all diligence in seeking to bring to a satisfactory issue a matter so deeply involving Presbyterian interests.

On the 28th January, 1852, the Synod discussed the overture, the result of which was the following resolution:—

"The Synod agree as to the desirableness of a union with the other divisions of the Presbyterian Church in the Colony, where this can be effected without any compromise of principle, or curtailment of the liberty at present enjoyed; that with that section of the Presbyterian interest denominated the Free Church, the Synod can discern no substantial hindrance to an incorporated Union, and are prepared to entertain the subject of Union with that Denomination, as calculated to promote in an eminent degree the interests of our common Christianity; and with the view of effecting so desirable an object, the Synod remit to the Melbourne Presbytery to correspond with their brethren of the Portland Presbytery as to the necessary steps to be taken in effecting the desired Union."

The Melbourne Presbytery, at their first meeting, 5th February, 1852, took up the *remit* from the Synod on the subject of union, more particularly, in the meanwhile, of Union with the Free Church. They agreed to communicate with the brethren of the Portland Presbytery, suggesting the appointment of one of their number to open correspondence with the Synod of the Free Church. A letter might be prepared setting forth the substantial unity that exists between the two Bodies, in respect to Doctrine, Discipline, and Government, and the mode of supporting the Christian ministry, and stating the advantages that would accrue from a cordial and an incorporated Union. Then the letter might be submitted to the Melbourne Presbytery, prior to its being forwarded to its destination, so that it might go with the *imprimatur* of the Synod.

Through delays occasioned by correspondence and other causes, it was not till the meeting of the Melbourne Presbytery on 5th November, 1852, that the reply of the Portland Presbytery was laid on the table. The brethren at Portland declined taking the initiatory step in the Union negotiations, having the persuasion that it more properly devolved on the Melbourne Presbytery to do so. Accordingly, it was resolved that Rev. Messrs. Ramsay and Hamilton be appointed a committee to prepare a communication, and forward it to the Committee on Union at Portland for their sanction.

It fell to the lot of Rev. R. Hamilton to prepare the letter, the first official communication on the subject of Presbyterian Union written in the Colony. He presented the draft of the letter to the Synod, which met at Portland on 24th January, 1853. The letter was approved, and the Moderator was instructed to forward it without delay to the Moderator of the Free Church Synod. It was despatched by the Rev. Andrew Ross, Moderator, on 25th January, 1853.

It will be observed that the United Presbyterian Synod distinctly recognized the importance of a general Union of the Presbyterian sections of the Church, and consequently the desirableness of a scheme which would embrace the Synod of Victoria as well as that of the Free Church. They were by no means opposed to Union with the State-aid receiving brethren. But, inasmuch as the Free Church were practical voluntaries like themselves, it was deemed the wisest plan to secure, in the first instance, Union with a Denomination from which it seemed an anomaly to be kept separate for a day longer than could be helped. A Union between these two bodies presented no obstacles to be overcome, no subtle points to be discussed, and no legal difficulties to be arranged. A few meetings of brotherly conference might arrange the basis. A few months might consummate the Union.

To make it plain that there was identity of practice in the two bodies in reference to the maintenance of ordinances, it is only necessary to quote the deliberate mind of the Free Church Synod on the question of accepting Government-aid, whether in land or money. At Geelong the proposal was discussed in the Deacons' Court, and it was resolved to apply to Government for a site on which to erect a Church. But the decision was postponed till the mind of the Synod was ascertained. The matter was brought before the Synodical meeting of 4th December, 1850, held at Melbourne. After consideration it was resolved and declared—

1. "That this portion of Christ's Church believes and holds, that, as the Lord Jesus Christ is Governor among the nations, and Prince of the Kings of the earth, it becomes nations and their rulers to own His supremacy, and in all their legislation and administration to seek His glory and the propagation of His truth.

2. "That it is plainly inconsistent with this view of national duty for any Government to endow and support error, which it must do if it support religious systems inconsistent with and antagonistic to each other.

3. "That as in the Legislation and Government of New South Wales, Judaism and Christianity, Popery and Protestantism, are practically treated as equally deserving of support from the public funds, and of grants of those lands which are vested in the Sovereign as trustee for the people, and as provision is made in the constitution given by the British Parliament to the Colony of Victoria for the continuance therein of the same procedure, the Synod feel called upon to protest against the principle involved in such procedure, and hold it to be the duty of the members of this Church to seek the abolition of the system hitherto pursued.

4. "That in order to render this protest effectual and consistent, the Synod consider it indispensable that the congregations of this Church should, as in time past, abstain from applying to the Colonial Government for either money or land for Church purposes.

5. "That neither the Synod nor its officers shall promote or sanction any application of the kind now condemned.

6. "That these resolutions are not to be held as precluding the acceptance of assistance, either in money or in land, or both, for schools, if the Legislature of Victoria should decide on giving aid to schools connected with the Church in consideration of the secular education imparted, and without interfering with their management and discipline."

There was only one dissent, that of Rev. John M'Lachlan, Geelong.

A Union, then, having been effected between these two sections, a great advance, it was believed, would have been made towards an all-comprehensive Union. There was no intention that negotiations should stop here. A partial Union would not have sufficed. Negotiations, however, would have been greatly simplified by having first effected the partial Union. The limited Union was designed simply as a step to another which would be full and complete. On this plan, how easy to conduct negotiations between two parties instead of three! Triangular conferences, like triangular conflicts, are exceedingly awkward and difficult of management. The true policy in the business was to unite piecemeal—to divide and conquer. A person must learn the alphabet before he can read.

By a variety of circumstances over which the United Presbyterians had no control, their simple and feasible scheme was superseded by one which bristled with difficulties. Before the dual plan of Union was tried—before it was steadily looked at—the threefold scheme of operation was launched. A whole year was allowed to elapse after reception of the United Presbyterian Synod's letter on Union before the Free Church Synod sent a reply. The letter was despatched in January, 1853. No notice was taken of it till the following December, and the consideration of it and the reply were further deferred till January, 1854. The resolution unanimously adopted on 4th January, 1854, by the Free Church Synod was the following :—

"That the Moderator be instructed to convey to the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria their high satisfaction with this communication, and the great importance which they attach to the Union of the different sections of the Presbyterian Church in this Colony, and to request information especially with reference to their Standards, and their course of education for the ministry, and to forward to them a copy of the Acts of this Synod."

The reply after so long delay was not encouraging. The Standards were their own Standards, with the exception of the reference to the Civil Magistrate, and were embodied in the Constitution of the first United Presbyterian Church, Collins-street, which was the model of all others. A temporary Constitution was adopted at first, but it was really never acted upon. As to their course of education for the ministry, there was no Colonial Church so far advanced as to have a hall for training students. The standard of ministerial qualification at Home and here was the same as their own. The answer was, therefore, anything but cordial, and afforded only small

ground for hope of a happy issue. No reply to it was ever sent. The idea of a twofold Union, prior to the threefold, was not entertained. So far from this, there seemed rather a straining after a pretext for not showing any eagerness for union with their voluntary brethren. A farewell was bid to the idea of a dual Union first, and a welcome given to that of a triangular one, with all its preliminary complications and distractions, its unwholesome fruit of delay, and even of disruption, its many heartburnings and threatened alienations.

The hindrances to an early Union of the two bodies that were alike in voluntary practices were twofold. The first was the action of the Melbourne Presbytery of the Synod of Australia, in opening negotiations on the triangular scheme in October, 1853, proposing simultaneous Union of the three bodies. The second was the change which the Free Church Synod effected from the voluntary to the State-aid practice, by their agreeing, in September, 1853, to accept building sites from Government. These new movements almost extinguished the hope of any speedy union, if union at all, on the dual plan prior to the Union of the whole. The influences which were at work in these directions accounted for the tardy response of the Free Church to the proposal of Union from the United Presbyterian Synod. The Union proposed on the larger scale without doubt sounded more ambitious and attractive, but the long-continued negotiations, and the contentions which ensued, well nigh wrecked the cause of union altogether.

Soon after the letter of the United Presbyterian Synod was sent, in January, 1853, to the Free Church Synod, the Melbourne Presbytery of the Synod of Australia, New South Wales, bestirred themselves. They were still in the leading-strings of the old Colony. They were, in a sense, under foreign jurisdiction. They were not free. In all their movements they were hampered by the controlling influence of a distant authority. And in the important movement which had been started with reference to Union between the other sections of Presbyterians, they were not quite in a position to take free action in order to share in the honour and benefits of a general amalgamation. They were trammelled ecclesiastically, and they were equally impeded by the tenure of their Church and manse properties, these being held under the Sydney Government. Meanwhile, if the Union proposed between the other Bodies is accomplished, and they, the Synod of Australia, are left outside, they seem to have feared it would possibly be more difficult to arrange satisfactorily the terms of union with the larger body.

Accordingly a correspondence was opened privately at first by the Melbourne Presbytery with the Moderator of the Synod of Australia, to prepare the way for separation and independence. Then, in July, 1853, Mr. Hetherington "directed the attention of the Melbourne Presbytery to the disadvantages of their remaining with the Synod of Australia, and urged the propriety of their seeking separation from the Synod."

On the 6th October a reply from the Moderator of Synod, dated

29th March, was submitted to the Presbytery, in response to the Moderator of Presbytery's unofficial communication. At the same meeting the Moderator of Presbytery, Mr. Hetherington, produced "The draft of a Bill, which, counting on the concurrence of the Presbytery, he had prepared to be submitted to the Legislative Council of Victoria, to give civil effect to the proposed separation." The draft was considered and adopted.

In addition to this—

"That the Moderator be instructed to transmit a copy of the proposed new Bill to the Moderator of Synod, to make a formal application, in name of the Presbytery for the release of the ministers and congregations in the Colony of Victoria from the Synod's jurisdiction, and to request that a *pro re nata* meeting of Synod be called, to be held in St. Andrew's Church, Sydney, on Wednesday, the 9th proximo, for the purpose of receiving and deciding upon their application."

On the 26th January, 1854, "THE SYNOD OF AUSTRALIA AUTHORIZED AND INSTRUCTED THE PRESBYTERY OF MELBOURNE TO SEPARATE ITSELF FROM THEIR JURISDICTION, AND TO FORM ITSELF INTO AN INDEPENDENT SYNOD."

On the 19th April the Melbourne Presbytery agreed to dissolve and to form themselves into a Synod, to be designated "THE SYNOD OF VICTORIA." The Synod divided into the two Presbyteries of Melbourne and of Geelong.

To return to the meeting of 6th October, 1853, when efforts for separation seemed to be in a fair way of being specially crowned with success: the Moderator took the first step towards a general Union. No progress having been made in the way of union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches, Mr. Hetherington interposed with his wider but more complicated plan. He gave notice of motion, at this meeting, to the following effect—

1. "That this Presbytery, deploring the existing divisions in the Presbyterian community of the Colony, and recognizing the benefits which the restoration of union in that community would confer, and their own obligation to seek it by all competent means, do resolve to take measures to promote so desirable an object.
2. "That, with this view, a Committee be appointed by the Presbytery to ascertain, by correspondence and conference with the other Presbyterian Bodies in the Colony, how far they, on their part, are disposed for Union, and on what terms they would agree to it, the said Committee to report to the Presbytery at its next meeting.
3. "That this Committee be composed of the Rev. Messrs. A. Love, P. Gunn, J. Reid, T. Heron, and I. Hetherington, Convener."

At the next meeting of Presbytery, on 4th January, 1854, the motion of which notice had been given was discussed and carried The Committee on Union having been appointed, they resolved on opening correspondence at once with the Moderators of the Free and of the United Presbyterian Churches, intimating the appointment of a Committee of Correspondence. The Committee "instructed the Convener to announce their appointment to the Free Church of Victoria and to the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria,

through their respective Moderators, to apprise these Churches of the desire of the Presbytery of Melbourne to seek the union of the different Presbyterian Churches of the Colony, and to invite them, on their part severally, to appoint committees to confer with them on the subject."

In supporting the above resolutions, Mr. Hetherington dwelt at length on the desirableness of the proposed Union, and, in proof of its practicability, read a letter from the Attorney-General, to whom, on behalf of the Presbytery, he had appealed for counsel on the several legal points involved, and also referred to interviews which he had had with ministers of the other Presbyterian Bodies.

At the date of this second opening of negotiations, with the view of Union, the number of ministers in the Synod of Victoria was fourteen — nine in the Melbourne Presbytery, and five in the Geelong; sixteen in the Free Church Synod, and eleven in the United Presbyterian.

The letter on Union from the Melbourne Presbytery of the Synod of Australia to the Free Church Synod reached that Body on the evening of the same day on which it was agreed to be sent—viz., the 4th January. The Synod was in session at the time the Presbytery met.

The letter on Union from the said Melbourne Presbytery to the United Presbyterian Synod was sent on 12th January, 1854, but the United Presbyterian Synod was not then in session, having finished its sittings fully a week before. It would not meet again for some months, but the Clerk of Synod, Rev. R. Hamilton, replied at once that he would take the earliest opportunity of bringing the subject under the consideration of the brethren. Indeed, the Melbourne Presbytery of the Synod of Australia sending their communication to the United Presbyterian Synod on the 12th, while sending their letter to the Free Church Synod on the 4th, seemed to indicate to the United Presbyterians that there was no necessity for any haste in taking steps to meet the other sections in conference. It was a matter of astute policy for the Melbourne Presbytery to confer first with the Free Church, and if possible come to an understanding with them as to the basis of Union, because they were mutually agreed on the important principle of State-endowments. Then, after these two had discovered a well-defined platform, on which they could unite without touching the great practical question of State-aid, they would unitedly be in a good position for dealing with the troublesome cry of voluntaryism.

On the other hand, this policy was just paying back the United Presbyterians in their own coin. For did not they open correspondence with the Free Church alone, and tacitly propose to effect a union with them as practical voluntaries, and then they would both be prepared to deal effectively with the State-support business. The plan of action begun by the United Presbyterians, however, was thoroughly defeated, not more by the sagacity and promptitude of the Melbourne Presbytery, Synod of Australia, than by the change of front presented by the Free Church. At the meeting of the Free

Church Synod in September, when the letter on Union from the United Presbyterian Synod of January was first noticed, and then only to have its consideration postponed for three months, it was agreed by a majority of eight to four to allow the congregations of the Church to accept sites from Government for building purposes. The basis of practical voluntaryism was now renounced. The older ministers, who had laid the foundations of the Church and had buried deep in its constitution the practice of repudiating all State-help, whether in lands or money, made a courageous fight for consistency, but were overpowered. Without any consultations of Presbyteries, sessions, or congregations, a fundamental principle of the Body, not to accept land from the State, was changed, at a single sitting of Synod, by a simple vote. No longer could the Free Church deal with Presbyterian Union as clear-eyed, consistent, and practical antagonists to Government-aid. Henceforth their sympathies in the way of Union must lie with the State-supported sections rather than with the voluntary one. The identity of the Free Church with the Melbourne Presbytery was made complete on 2nd November, 1854, by the Synod agreeing to accept money as well as land. Hence it was in this direction that negotiations took shape. There was a cordial sympathy and a significant promptness displayed on that memorable January, 1854, between the Melbourne Presbytery of the Synod of Australia and the Free Church Synod. At the evening meeting of the Synod, the letter on Union, written and received the same day, was read and discussed. After mature deliberation, the Free Church brethren resolved to appoint a committee to confer with that of the Synod of Victoria. It would have been counted great discourtesy to have kept the letter eight months without notice, as was done with the United Presbyterian letter, and then, when it was noticed, to have postponed its consideration for three months more. So far from this, the Synod at once named, as a Committee of Conference on Union, the Rev. Drs. Mackay and Cairns, Rev. Messrs. Tait, Miller, and Sinclair, and Messrs. Dickson and Drummond, a report of proceedings to be brought up at next meeting of Synod.

The two Committees lost no time in meeting for conference. They held their first meeting on 16th January, 1854. This meeting was of necessity preliminary, and one in which both parties were, of course, feeling their way. The first point which suggested itself for consideration was the designation which the Body should bear in the event of Union. It was proposed on the one side that the name of the Supreme Court of the United Church should be "THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA, ADHERING TO THE STANDARDS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND."

It was considered essential to the security of Church property in connection with the Synod of Victoria that the Standards should be thus specified. This, however, was a very questionable designation in the estimation of the other party. The Free Church friends would not easily tolerate a name which would express any connection with the Church of Scotland, from which they had separated and

against which they had raised their loudest protest. It was wisely suggested that, as a point of law was involved, it would be well to consult the Attorney-General, and ascertain whether the name proposed was at all necessary in order to secure property held under the Synod of Australia in the case of union.

At the second meeting of the conference, on 14th February, 1854, it was reported that an interview had been held with the Attorney-General, and he gave it as his opinion that any reference to the Church of Scotland, in the new relations proposed to be formed, would be unnecessary. The two Committees, therefore, came to the unanimous conclusion that a proper name for the new Denomination would be simply "THE SYNOD OF VICTORIA."

Another and more important topic for consideration was the basis of the united Body. There was no room here for diversity of opinion. On the 15th February Mr. Hetherington reported to the Presbytery that the communication of the committee sent to the Free Church Synod had been most cordially responded to, that a committee had been forthwith appointed, and that the two committees had held two conferences, at which the utmost anxiety was displayed by all parties to compass the object proposed.

He also reported that, as the result of the deliberations, it was mutually agreed that a Union of the two Churches might be effected on the following basis :—

1. That in their Union they do form themselves into a Synod, to be designated "The Synod of Victoria."

2. That the Standards adopted and maintained by the said Synod be the Standards of the Church of Scotland, viz.—The Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Directory for Public Worship, the Form of Presbyterian Church Government agreed on by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster in 1643, and the Second Book of Discipline, together with a Fundamental Act declaratory of the magistrates' duty in relation to the Church, the Synod's independence, and the right of every congregation to have an effective voice in the election of its own minister.

The Committees in Conference also agreed to admit a declaration to the effect—

"That the United Church should not be under the superintendence or control, or be subject to the interference of any body whatever external to itself ; and that its Supreme Governing Assembly should possess the right of regulating and determining finally all matters pertaining to the internal affairs of the Church, and also all matters pertaining to its relations to all other portions of the professing Church whatsoever."

It will be noticed that in the beginning of the second clause the phrase, "Standards of the Church of Scotland" occur. The report of the Presbytery's proceedings appeared in the Press on the 18th February, and contained this objectionable phraseology. At once it caught the eye of the Moderator of the Free Church Synod, Rev. Dr. Cairns, who was also Convener of the Committee on Union. This phrase had not the sanction of the Conference, and on this ground alone was improper. But, besides this, the Free Church members were very sensitive about any reference to the Standards

of the Church of Scotland, as if it might be intended to convey an approval of the proceedings of the Scottish Establishment in matters about which the Free Church complained. It was felt that extreme caution was required in conducting these negotiations, so that no cause for fault-finding might be given to leading men in the Church at Home. The Colonial Church must be dependent for many years to come on Home for ministerial supply, and it was necessary to discuss a basis which would not only meet the requirements of the United Church here, but would find acceptance on all sides in Scotland.

The use of the obnoxious phrase "Standards of the Church of Scotland" looked somewhat invidious, because the Standards of the Free Church and of the United Presbyterian Church were the same as those of the Church of Scotland. However, the Rev. Mr. Hetherington, at a meeting of Presbytery on 5th April, 1854, proposed a conciliatory motion, which removed all misunderstanding.

The following was the resolution adopted :—

"The Presbytery having heard and considered a correspondence between the Rev. Dr. Cairns and the Rev. I. Hetherington respecting the expression 'Standards of the Church of Scotland,' in the report submitted to the Presbytery at its last meeting by Mr. Hetherington, as Convener to the Conference Committee formerly appointed by this Court, and perceiving by said correspondence that the Rev. Dr. Cairns and others—ministers and members of the Free Church—regard that expression in the report as comprehending within its meaning Lord Aberdeen's Bill and recent acts and proceedings of the Established Church of Scotland, which was not contemplated either by the Convener or any other member of Presbytery, resolve that the said expression be erased from the report, and that the Standards which follow that expression be simply enumerated."

Up to this time no conference had been held by the United Presbyterian Committee on Union with either of the other sections. On the 4th April, 1854, the Free Church Synod appointed a committee, consisting of Rev. Drs. Cairns and Mackay and the Rev. Messrs. Simpson, Divorty, and Miller. These were instructed to conduct any correspondence which might be found necessary and report to next meeting of Synod. The United Presbyterian Committee were —Rev. Messrs. Ramsay, Jarrett, Hamilton, and Dalrymple. On 3rd May the number was enlarged, so as to embrace also Rev. D. Chapman and Dr. M'Arthur. At this date it was reported by the Clerk of the Melbourne Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church that the two committees of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches had agreed to meet in conference the evening before, but in consequence of the illness of several members of committee, the meeting lapsed. A conference was held subsequently on the 26th June. And the first meeting of the United Presbyterian Committee with that of the Synod of Victoria was held on 5th July, 1854.

Before stating the result of these conferences, which have at length become triangular, it is necessary to bring up our record from the beginning of April, 1854. On 5th April, the Free Church Synod called for the report of the Committee on Union appointed to corres-

pond with the Presbytery of Melbourne in connection with the Established Church of Scotland. The Synod re-appointed the committee to continue the negotiations, and instructed them to have regard, in all they did in this matter, to the two following conditions :—

"That no Union can be entered into till the Presbytery of Melbourne is a free and independent judicatory, separate from the jurisdiction of, and connection with, any other Church or ecclesiastical body whatever ; and, second, that after the Presbytery is thus separate and independent, the two judicatories shall unite together as two courts on an equal footing, and form one general Synod, on a basis or bond of Union distinctly setting forth the great principles laid down in the Fundamental Act of this Synod, and report to the next meeting."

It was further resolved—

"That, considering the importance of having the minds of the people fully enlightened in regard to this very grave and important matter, the committee be instructed to draw up a brief pastoral letter to the members and adherents of the Free Church throughout the Colony, setting forth the obligation and advantages of Union among the different sections of the Presbyterian body, and the general principles on which it ought to be effected, and that it be read from his pulpit by each minister on an early Sabbath."

On 19th April, as already anticipated, the Melbourne Presbytery, under the authority of the Synod of Australia, adopted their new and independent constitution under the name of the Synod of Victoria, declared their unaltered adherence to the Standards which they had hitherto maintained, adopted the designation of the "Synod of Victoria," embracing two Presbyteries of Melbourne and of Geelong, and with special reference to Union negotiations, put on record the following statement :—"It is exceedingly desirable, for the best interests of religion in the Colony, and of this Church in particular, that the Synod be placed on a broad and comprehensive basis, not avowing an exclusive preference for any particular Church, and as free as possible from anything likely to prevent Presbyterians in general from uniting in one large and influential body, ready to hold friendly intercourse with every other religious communion which professes a general adherence to the same Standards, they resolved and agreed to record on the present occasion their firm determination to maintain a separate, distinct, and independent position, and especially to assert their uncontrolled and perfect freedom in the management of all their spiritual and ecclesiastical concerns agreeably to the Standards above described."

On 5th July, 1854, the Free Church Synod met. The Moderator—Convener of the Committee on Union—gave in a report. In this report there is reference made to a series of articles of Union, which had been under the consideration of the Committee. These articles had been prepared as a basis of Union with the Synod of Victoria, in conformity to the Synod's instructions. The Rev. Mr. Tait, Clerk of Synod, had drawn up the basis, and after having been considered by the Committee, it was forwarded for revision to the Committee of the Synod of Victoria. The Rev. I. Hetherington, Convener, brought the proposed basis under the notice of the Synod on the 4th

July, when the articles were read and considered *seriatim*. Various amendments were adopted, and the Convener was instructed to return them in their altered form to the Free Church Committee. There was one important amendment which proposed to limit the jurisdiction of the office-bearers of the Church exclusively to spiritual things.

Accordingly, on the 5th July, the articles, in their amended form, were submitted by Dr. Cairns to the Synod. These were read one by one and subjected to critical revision. The third article, proposing to confine the jurisdiction of the Church Courts to spiritual matters exclusively, awakened serious difficulty. The Free Church ministers in Scotland had suffered severely from the intermeddling of the civil law with the affairs of the Church, and they must guard themselves against the possibility of unscriptural and injurious interference from the secular power. The question, therefore, pressed itself strongly on the attention of the Synod how best to secure the temporal interests of the Denomination by carefully expressed articles of Union. In order to set at rest doubts and difficulties as to the legal consequences of Union with the Synod of Victoria, it was resolved—"That the ablest Counsel in the Colony should be obtained, so that all necessary steps might be taken for the complete security of Free Church property in the event of Union."

The Committee were further instructed to arrange with the Committee of the Synod of Victoria on a point of extreme importance, viz.—"From what source the United Church should receive ministerial supplies, in order to meet immediate wants."

At this meeting, an effort was made to secure the consent of the Synod to the acceptance of money from the State as well as land. The Rev. W. Henderson moved, and Rev. A. M'Vean seconded—

"That the fourth resolution of the Church on State-support for religion be rescinded."

The motion, however, was lost by a majority of three. This movement indicated, on the part of some of the members of the Free Church, a desire to advance in the line of conformity to the practice of the Synod of Victoria, rather than in that of the example of the founders of their own Body. And it had not the appearance of an endeavour to smooth the way of Union with the United Presbyterians. While the Synod rejected the proposal to open the door at present for the acceptance of Government grants of money, there seemed a desire to have a clear understanding on the subject of State grants with the Synod of Victoria. The rejection of the motion seemed a little like reaction in favour of voluntaryism. To put the matter in a proper light it was unanimously agreed—"That, although there were resolutions of this Synod still in force against receiving endowments from the Colonial Government, the Synod did not consider this to be an obstacle to proceeding forward to Union with the brethren of the Synod of Victoria, but that it shall be always open to the brethren of this Synod, subsequent to the Union, to raise the question of the principle and expediency of these endowments being received; and that

with a view to conference with them on this and other matters the Moderator be instructed to intimate to the Moderator of the Synod of Victoria that this Synod would be prepared to confer with them in John Knox Church vestry the following day, at 12 o'clock noon."

On the 6th July the proposed Conference was held, and on the same day Mr. Hetherington reported to the Synod of Victoria that, "After a long conference with the Committee of the Free Church relative to the Articles of Union transmitted from the latter body, no satisfactory result had been arrived at."

On the same day Dr. Cairns reported to the Free Church Synod what had transpired. No mutual agreement had been reached in regard to the Articles; and while the Free Church Committee insisted that ministerial supply should be taken from the Free Church of Scotland alone to meet the immediate wants of the United Church, the Committee of the Synod of Victoria were equally earnest in their opposition to any recorded arrangement of that kind. The Free Church Synod agreed to "remit the whole question of Union to the careful consideration of the Union Committee, and authorize them to request the Moderator to call a *pro re nata* meeting of Synod if they should see cause."

Meanwhile the two Committees held frequent meetings for the purpose of discussing the Articles of Union, and finding whether they could come to agreement. The question respecting the exclusive jurisdiction of the Church in spiritual matters was the principal obstruction to harmony. At length, however, the difficulty, by the month of September, seemed to be surmounted. This being so, it was mutually agreed that *pro re nata* meetings of the two Synods should be held on the same day, so that arrangements might the more easily be made for the consummation of the Union. It was imagined the way could be seen clear to the grand achievement, which might be realized within not many months.

Accordingly, on the 19th September, 1854, the two Synods of Victoria and of the Free Church met by special summons.

The Rev. I. Hetherington laid on the table of the Synod of Victoria the report of a conference held by the Committee on Union with that of the Free Church, at which "the Articles of Union between the two Churches had been fully reconsidered by the Committees, and the alterations formerly insisted upon, on behalf of this Synod, had been adopted." The six Articles were read, various additional alterations were made on the fifth, after which it was agreed that these Articles (see below), as now amended, if accepted by the other Body, should be accepted by this Synod as a basis of Union with the Free Church.

The Moderator announced that he had a communication from the Moderator of the Free Church, signifying their desire for a conference of the two Synods at 8 o'clock the same evening.

The conference took place. A full statement was made by Mr. Hetherington of the alterations on the Articles proposed by the Synod of Victoria and finally agreed upon. To these the Free Church gave their assent. But, in turn, they proposed an alteration

on the fifth Article. They desired that the United Church should "hold itself at liberty to maintain communion and correspondence with all other faithful Presbyterian Churches throughout the world." A genuine spirit of Union seems to have pervaded the meeting of the Synods, and this amendment was unanimously agreed to by the Synod of Victoria.

The ambiguous phrase, "All other faithful Presbyterian Churches," was accepted by the brethren of the Synod of Victoria in the spirit of the French motto, "*Honi soit qui mal y pense.*" The intention of the Free Church, it was imagined afterwards, might be to exclude the Established Church of Scotland, because they had permitted and submitted to the interference of the Civil Magistrate with the spiritual functions of the Church Courts. The Synod of Victoria did not view the expression in this light, and did not object at the time to its adoption. But on reflection some of the ministers awoke to the idea that the phrase was capable of an offensive application. The result was a measure of unpleasantness in the negotiations.

The two Synods having accepted the basis in its integrity, after full consideration of the different amendments, "the negotiations were held to be complete." In the prospect, then, of a speedy consummation of the Union, it was agreed, "That the two Synods should make arrangements for bringing the subject of this Union before the congregations under their jurisdiction respectively with as little delay as possible, and when this was done that the two Synods should be summoned for the purpose of completing the Union, at a period not later than three months from the present time."

It was also resolved to appoint Dr. Mackay and Messrs. Hetherington and Clow a committee to prepare a memorial for Counsel in regard to the effects of the contemplated Union on the properties of the respective bodies.

The following was the basis of Union as finally agreed upon by the two Synods :—

"We, the undersigned ministers and elders of the Synod of Victoria and of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, constituting the supreme judicatories of our respective Churches, and being, as such, free and independent, and under no external jurisdiction or control whatever, having resolved, after long and prayerful deliberation and repeated friendly conferences, held on the motion and instigation of the former Synod, to unite together in one Synod and one Church, being satisfied that there is no longer any impediment or hindrance to the same, and that we hold the same Standards and Formularies—namely, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Form of Presbyterial Church Government, the Directory for Public Worship, and the Second Book of Discipline—do now, in the name of the Great Head of the Church, and with solemn prayer for His guidance and blessing, join and unite together in one Synod, to be called 'The Presbyterian Church of Victoria,' having superintendence and jurisdiction over all Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions and Congregations that homologate and agree to this Union, in the same way and with the same powers and authorities as the aforesaid Synods; and resolve and determine that the following be the fundamental principles and articles of this Union, and be subscribed by each of the members of the new Synod, namely :—

I. "That the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Form of Presbyterial Church Government, the Directory for

Public Worship, and the Second Book of Discipline be the Standards and Formularies of this Church.

II. "That, according to the views and principles laid down in the said Confession on the duty of the Civil Magistrate in regard to religion, he is bound and required to use his official power and influence for the maintenance, protection, and support of the truth, and the restraining and putting down error and ungodliness, but that that is to be done only in accordance with the requirements of the Word of God, and within the sphere to which mere Civil authority is by that Word restricted; and that, in subscribing to the said Confession, the ministers and elders of this Church are not to be understood as encouraging or countenancing persecuting or intolerant principles, or as professing any views inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment.

III. "That according to the views and principles laid down in the said Confession in regard to the sole Headship of Christ over His Church, and the authority with which He has invested her rulers, they have an independent and exclusive jurisdiction in the government of the Church in all spiritual things; that it belongs to them alone to admit or exclude members and office-bearers, and to license and ordain ministers, to induct and settle them over congregations, and to suspend or depose them; that with these and the like functions, it is equally presumptuous and unwarrantable in the Magistrate to interfere, and faithless and sinful in the Church to permit or submit to such interference, and that from any of the decisions of her judicatories in reference to such spiritual matters, there can be no appeal to any civil authority whatever.

IV. "That, according to the views and principles laid down in the Confession of Faith and in the Second Book of Discipline in regard to the Headship of Christ over the members of the Church individually, they have rights and privileges secured to them which may not be interfered with, and that the rulers are to exercise their authority so as to have respect to these, and take care that no elder or minister be intruded on any congregation contrary to their will; and, in particular, that it shall be a fundamental rule of this Church that the election of ministers, ruling elders, and deacons belongs to the members of each separate congregation in full communion, the judicatories of the Church superintending and regulating the same.

V. "That this Synod, while holding itself at liberty to maintain communion and correspondence with all other faithful Presbyterian Churches throughout the world, has yet of right, and is determined to maintain, a separate and independent character and position, and to preserve unimpaired a supreme and independent jurisdiction over its subordinate judicatories and congregations and people, irrespective of any other Church or body whatsoever; and that all privileges, whether ecclesiastical or temporal, held by any of the ministry, office-bearers, or other members, in virtue of their office and membership respectively, are and shall be possessed and enjoyed free from the interference or control of any ecclesiastical Body foreign to itself.

VI. "That the foregoing principles be summed up in the subjoined formula, and be signed by every licentiate before receiving license, and by every minister previous to his reception into the Synod, or induction into any of its congregations.

FORMULA.

"I do hereby declare that I do sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith, approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the year 1647, to be the truth of God; and I do likewise own the purity of worship presently authorized and practised in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and also the Presbyterian government and discipline thereof; which Doctrine, Discipline, and Church Government, I am persuaded, are founded on the Word of God, and agreeable thereto. I likewise sincerely and heartily hold the principles respecting the supremacy of Christ over His Church, and her subjection to Him as her only Head, and the freedom from secular control in the management of the affairs of Christ's House, belonging to her in virtue of His institution, which are set forth in the Articles of Union agreed on and subscribed by the ministers and elders constituting

the Synod on . . . . I approve of all the other declarations and provisions of the said Articles ; and I promise that, through the grace of God, I shall firmly and constantly adhere to the same, and, to the utmost of my power, shall, in my station, assert, maintain, and defend the said Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government of this Church, together with its exclusive and final spiritual jurisdiction, and its independence from all external control and interference. And I promise that I shall follow no divisive courses from the principles and constitution of this Church, renouncing all doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever contrary to or inconsistent with the same."

This may be called the first basis on which the Synod of Victoria and that of the Free Church came to a mutual agreement. It was the first, because it came, in course of time, to be superseded by another and a simpler.

It is time now that we noticed the different steps taken between the United Presbyterian Synod and the other two Synods. The negotiations related above were not conducted altogether without reference to the United Presbyterians. A glance at the second Article of the basis will show this. But the voluntary United Presbyterian Synod being free of all Government grants had no special interest in discussions about property and legal enactments for its security, and having been outside the questions which, in 1843, rent the Church of Scotland in two, they had not the same sensitiveness about words and phrases used in the basis which had a bearing on the causes of the great Disruption. Hence the more engrossing interest, apparently, which the other two Synods manifested in their conferences one with another.

The first Conference on Union held by the United Presbyterian Committee was with that of the Free Church. The two meetings held in May, mentioned above, were purely preliminary. At the one held on 27th May, 1854, the conference was marked by mutually kind and friendly feeling. And, in order to give point to the next conference, Rev. Dr. Mackay and Rev. Mr. Ramsay were appointed a sub-committee to prepare topics on which discussion might turn.

The next meeting was held on the 26th June.

At a meeting of the Melbourne Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Synod, on 5th July, it was reported—

"That the two Committees on Union of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches had met ; that considerable discussion had taken place ; that prejudices had to some extent given way ; that points for consideration had been submitted by a sub-committee appointed for the purpose ; that a favourable feeling to Union was manifested ; that the chief obstacle to Union seemed to be a disposition on the part of certain members of the Free Church to recede from the resolution of that Church to refuse all State-support ; that both Committees were at one as to the propriety of aiming at a Union of the three sections of Presbyterians in the Colony ; and that they agreed to meet once a month."

It was acknowledged on the part of the Free Church, that they not only approved of the principle of endowments, but in all likelihood would not be satisfied till they obtained grants of money as well as of building sites. This line of argument did not fall pleasantly on the ears of voluntaryism. It was sufficiently painful to see the Free

Church Synod resile from their fundamental deed, which renounced grants of land from the State. Even this deviation, however saddening though it was, might have been tolerated, because there might be a distinction drawn between the acceptance of land and that of money. But the idea of the Free Church taking Treasury gifts as well as sites, contrary to their own fundamental principles, was a probability strongly deprecated. It seemed as if it might extinguish the hope of Union so far as the United Presbyterians were concerned. The Conference, therefore, was without the element of perfect agreement.

The next meeting of the two Committees was held on 24th July, but, in consequence of a paucity of attendance, it was adjourned, after conversation simply, till the 31st. At this adjourned meeting, from which several leading members were absent, a pleasant conference was held. All was harmony and good feeling. A series of resolutions was proposed, founded on the points that had been prepared for the meeting of 26th June, and was unanimously adopted. These resolutions were the following:—

I. "That the two Churches are found to be agreed in all essential points of Doctrine, Discipline, and Government.

II. "That the public ordinances of the gospel are found to be maintained in both Communions exclusively by the free-will offerings of the people.

III. "That while holding different views as tothe province and duty of the Civil Magistrate in respect to the endowment of the Christian religion, both Churches are found to repudiate the system of indiscriminate endowment of truth and error adopted in this Colony, as altogether unscriptural and revolting in its character, as well as fraught with the utmost mischief to the interests of pure and undefiled religion. And that against this system both Churches are found to have repeatedly, in a solemn and public manner, issued their testimony, and that they stand pledged to use every legitimate means to effect its speedy abolition.

IV. "That the question of civil establishments of religion, though one on which the Churches are divided, yet, not being one which affords in its theoretical aspect any warrantable ground of distance or separation, the Churches are found to be quite willing that said question should not form any test of communion, either in the case of members or office-bearers, but that it should be held as a matter of mutual and charitable forbearance.

V. "That the two Churches being thus found to be substantially at one in all points essential to an incorporated Union, the formation of such a Union seems not only desirable but even imperatively required in due submission to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole Head of the Church."

These conclusions having been arrived at, after much serious deliberation, it was agreed by the Conference that they should be submitted to their respective Synods for approval. They seemed to establish the practicability and propriety of an early Union of the Synods.

On 22nd August these two Committees met again, when the Conference agreed to recommend to the respective Synods the adoption of the proposition that there should be no new applications for Government-support on the part of congregations that should be formed after the Union, the object of the United Presbyterians being to confine the evil which they complained of within the narrowest limits.

On 23rd August the three Committees of the different Bodies met together the first time for conference. They met during the day, appointed a sub-committee, and adjourned till the evening. The meeting was not a comfortable one. The cause of the trouble was, not the Standards—they were all right—but the voluntary element, and yet all believed that State-help would by-and-by be abolished by the Legislature. Two of the Committees would not agree to recommend to their Synods that the new congregations of the United Church should be hindered from applying for aid from Government. The Conference therefore broke up, without coming to any agreement. The prospect of a threefold Presbyterian cord being soon formed did not look bright that evening.

On the 19th September, the Synod of Victoria met, and the report of the Committee on Union elicited the following resolution: —"That, in their judgment, the only sound basis on which a Union with the United Presbyterian Church could be effected is that the existing interests of ministers and congregations be protected, and that it be left to congregations, hereafter to be formed, to apply for Government assistance or not, as they might decide for themselves, subject to such arrangements as might be made by the judicatories of the Church."

This decision was in due course communicated to the Committee of the United Presbyterian Church.

On the 20th September, the Synod of the Free Church met. After considering the report of the Committee on Union, it was unanimously resolved—"That the meeting held in the United Presbyterian Manse, Collins-street, on the 31st July cannot be held as a regular meeting, not having been duly convened, but is to be regarded merely as a conversation between the parties present."

The Synod then resolved to record—"That they were prepared to go forward with the proposed Union with the United Presbyterian Church on the terms laid down in the articles already agreed to as the basis of Union between the Synod of Victoria and this Synod; it being understood that the question as to the United Synod giving its sanction or not to the new congregations that may be formed under its superintendence receiving assistance from the Colonial Government shall be an open one, and be decided as to their wisdom may seem fit."

It was further resolved—"That the same Committee be continued, with the addition of the Rev. D. M'Donald, and that Mr. M'Donald be appointed convener, Dr. Cairns having resigned."

These communications were laid on the table of the United Presbyterian Synod on 1st November, 1854. The following resolution was adopted in reply to the Synod of Victoria:—

"The Synod, after mature consideration, resolved to record and to intimate to the Synod of Victoria their regret that the said Synod should not have seen fit to adopt, as the basis of Union, the mutual concession agreed to at the Conference of the two Union Committees, which took place in the Scots-Church on the 22nd August, 1854; that they do not see that they can enter into Union on the basis laid down by the Synod of Victoria, inasmuch as it affords no guarantee for the discontinuance of the evil of State-dependence, against

which they have ever seriously protested; that in the absence of such a guarantee in respect to congregations that might hereafter be formed under the superintendence of the United Body, this Synod can come under no engagement to protect existing interests of those ministers and congregations that are at present in the receipt of State-aid, and that they can only in such circumstances entertain the proposal of Union on the understanding that the United Synod should have unrestricted action in dealing with the whole system of State connection and support, as they see fit."

At the same meeting, on 1st November, the United Presbyterian Synod came to the following deliverance in answer to the communication from the Free Church Synod:—

"That they can discern no grounds why the meeting of the 31st July last, referred to in the foregoing minute of the Free Church Synod, should not be regarded as perfectly regular, having been convened by the Secretary of the Joint-Committees in Council assembled, and that the postponement had taken place entirely in consequence of the paucity of the brethren in attendance on the 24th July, the day appointed.

"That, considering the conclusions arrived at by the two Committees at the said meeting as a fair representation of the relations in which the two Churches stand to each other, and of the spirit by which they are generally pervaded, the Synod agree to record their readiness to enter into an incorporated Union with their brethren of the Free Church, and that, as far as the members of Synod have had an opportunity of examining the Articles referred to in the aforesaid minute of the Free Church Synod, they are disposed to adopt them as the basis of the proposed Union, provided there be inserted in the ordination Formula annexed, after the words Confession of Faith, the following clause:—'Except in so far as the said Confession teaches, or is supposed to teach, persecuting and intolerant principles,' but, inasmuch as the matter in hand is of vast importance, the Synod would recommend that the whole document should receive from the Union Committees of both Synods a still more careful revision previous to its final adoption as the basis of Union.

"Further, the Synod resolve—That in respect to union with their brethren of the Free Presbyterian Church, they see no necessity for any restriction imposed on the action of the United Synod in dealing with any application for State-aid from any new congregation that may be formed under its superintendence, being confident that the wisdom of the United Synod, under the blessing and guidance of the Great Head of the Church, will at any time afford sufficient protection from those evils against which, in their several capacities, they have all along seriously protested."

CHAPTER IX.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH A VIEW TO UNION—Continued—1854-1855.

At this stage there were breakers ahead. Various causes existed to create perplexity and embarrassment. Difficulties, not altogether unexpected, were springing up, and required to be grappled with. Others, not apprehended, would demand the utmost skill, patience, and good judgment on the part of the leaders to prevent the wreck of all efforts to reach Union. The first of these related to the security of the Church property in the event of Union. The Churches, manses, and sites of the Synod of Victoria were all bound under an Act of the New South Wales Government to a connection with the Church of Scotland. This connection the Free Church most jealously repudiated.

On the 1st November, 1854, the Rev. Dr. Mackay was called upon for a report of the Joint-Committee appointed by the two Synods proposing to co-operate in preparing a Memorial for Counsel in regard to the effect of the contemplated Union on the properties of the respective Bodies. The question to be answered was—

"Whether the Act Victoria, 19th April, 1854, protected the property of the congregations, and afforded a security against civil consequences affecting the status of the ministers of the united Body, and what the adequate remedies would be if it be not sufficient for the purpose."

Dr. Mackay had been appointed by the Joint-Committee to prepare the Memorial. Having drawn up a statement for Counsel, he submitted it for approval to Rev. Messrs. Hetherington and Clow, the other members.

The paper simply stated the relative position of the two Churches and pointed out the evils to which they would be subjected, more especially the Free Church, in the event of finding, after having united under the said Act, that the Synod of Victoria still retained a statutory connection with the Church of Scotland. The other members of Committee were not satisfied with the representation given in the Memorial as to the position of the Synod of Victoria. Without altering the Memorial, it was agreed that Mr. Hetherington should attach Annotations for the better guidance of Counsel and for their own satisfaction. Mr. Hetherington's object in his appended notes was to impress Counsel with the real and, it might be, the unalterable relation existing between the Synod of Victoria and the Established Church of Scotland. He affirmed this connection to consist—

"First, in affinity, she being their ecclesiastical parent; Second, in conformity, they maintaining her doctrines and form of procedure; Third, in correspondence, she having the privilege, in virtue of such affinity and conformity, of issuing counsel and admonition to them, and they the privilege of asking counsel and admonition of her."

There could be no difficulty in understanding these relations. No one would dispute them. But the main question was, whether it would be proper for these relations to remain altogether unmodified after a general Union had been effected? Would it be a right or practicable thing for a portion of the united Body to retain such relations by statute-law, while the property of the other uniting party and the status of their ministers might be imperilled? Such a Union, at all events, could not be based on a unity or a fair community of interest. So long as the property question was settled on an equitable and a secure basis, the relations in each of the uniting Bodies to the respective parent Churches in Scotland would remain substantially the same. And the general Body in the Colony, whether in the case of a twofold or a threefold Union, would be perfectly competent to hold correspondence with any or all of the Scottish Churches on any given subject, just as occasion might arise.

The Memorial, with Mr. Hetherington's notes, was returned to Dr. Mackay. He, in his turn, made his Annotations, and so his report to the Synod on 1st November, 1854, embraced—First, the Memorial for Counsel; Second, the Memorial with Mr. Hetherington's Annotations; and Third, the Memorial with Dr. Mackay's remarks on the Annotations. The Synod, after full consideration of the Memorial with the accompanying notes, resolved—

"That these documents be submitted to Counsel, in accordance with the agreement to this effect previously come to by the two Synods; and that it be remitted to the Union Committee to confer with the other brethren on the subject of the Annotations, and in regard to their relations to the Established Church of Scotland, and to report with as little delay as possible."

At this meeting of the Free Church Synod, a resolution was carried having an important bearing on Union, so far as the United Presbyterian Church was concerned. This matter, though referred to already in a former page, yet here requires a fuller rehearsal. A number of the ministers and congregations of the Body felt that they were subjected to a grievous disability in being prohibited, by a clause in the Church Constitution Act, and by repeated Synodical resolutions, from participating in the State-grants of money. The older members of the Synod, who assisted in the framing of the constitution, resisted strenuously every effort to break down the barrier. The more recent members felt that, as it was in accordance with Free Church principles to receive help in money from Government, provided there was no interference with their spiritual privileges, therefore it was a duty to accept. Accordingly, on 2nd November, the Rev. Dr. Cairns proposed, and Mr. Hume seconded—

"That while the Free Church disapproves of the principle, and protests against the practice of endowing indiscriminately truth and error, it is not necessary to the validity of such disapprobation and protest that State-aid should be refused, and it is not expedient, especially in the present circumstances of the Colony, that the Church should by a prohibitive law prevent her people from receiving from the public funds grants of money for Church as well as for school purposes."

The motion was carried by a majority of 8 to 7.

In order to give immediate effect to the resolution, carried by the very small majority—

"A committee was appointed, at the meeting on the following day, to confer with the Government in reference to obtaining whatever proportion of the sum set apart for the support of religion by the Colonial Government can be obtained for the congregations of this Church that may desire to receive it."

The question, however, was not regarded by the minority as altogether settled by the resolution that had been carried. Another effort was to be made at next meeting of Synod to reverse the majority. On the 4th April, 1855, a memorial was presented by the John Knox Kirk Session—

"Praying the Synod to rescind the rosolution come to at its last meeting to accept Government aid; and a petition to the same effect from the congregation."

However, the Synod had two memorials of an opposite character presented for consideration. One was from the congregation at Sandhurst—the other from the Kirk Session, Committee of Management, and congregation of Kilmore—"both praying the Synod to continue the said resolution in force."

After full discussion, it was proposed by Rev. W. Miller, and seconded by Mr. Everist—

"That the resolution of last meeting of Synod, in regard to the acceptance of aid from the public funds for Churches, be rescinded, as being fatal to the validity of the Synod's protest against the indiscriminate endowment of truth and error by the Colonial Government."

To this, however, an amendment was proposed by Rev. D. M'Donald, and seconded by Rev. A. M'Vean—

"That the resolution of last Synod anent State-aid be confirmed."

The amendment was carried by eleven to four. Against the decision the Rev. Dr. Mackay, Rev. J. Tait, Rev. W. Miller, and Mr. T. Everist entered their dissent.

To resume the subject of the Memorial for Counsel, with its two-fold string of notes. The documents were submitted to two of the ablest lawyers of Melbourne, as ordered by the Synod in November. The answer of Counsel was clear and unhesitating. This was in substance—

"That the Synod of Victoria Act does not sever connection with the Established Church of Scotland, and that a new Act is necessary to effect that separation and to make it safe in the eye of the law for the Free Presbyterian Synod to unite with the Synod of Victoria."

These documents, containing such a distinct averment of connection on the part of the Synod of Victoria with the Church of Scotland, meanwhile greatly alarmed and astonished the Free Church. Had they not protested, in the most solemn and effective manner by the Disruption movement, against all connection with the Established

Church? If the connection existing between the Synod of Victoria and the Established Church in Scotland is to be maintained by express deed of the united body in the Colony, where would be the consistency of the Free Church, and of what value would be their protest of 1843? Besides, did not the Synod of Victoria agree in the basis already framed for Union to declare it to be presumptuous in the Magistrate to interfere with the spiritual functions of the Church, and faithless and sinful in the Church to permit or submit to such interference? And was not this declaration on their part a distinct testimony against the Church of Scotland, which had permitted and submitted to that very thing? Moreover, had not the Synod of Victoria agreed in the same basis to maintain communion and correspondence with "all other faithful Churches," implying exclusion of the Church of Scotland, seeing she had been unfaithful?

The Free Church Committee, therefore, in corresponding with the Committee of the Synod of Victoria, trod on the most ticklish and delicate ground. The Synod of Victoria had no conception of such an interpretation being put on the Articles of Union. It seemed almost as if they had been caught in a snare. They never dreamed of excluding their parent Church from all alliance or fellowship. They could never agree to repudiate correspondence with the Body from which they had sprung, and towards which they cherished the warmest regard. The correspondence assumed the appearance very much of irreconcilable antagonism. It seemed as if the cause of Union would be ruined. The Synod of Victoria were willing to make a small concession. They were ready to declare—

"That in any correspondence between the United Church and other Churches, no minister should be called upon to perform any act which he conscientiously might consider inconsistent with any solemn engagement he had previously entered into."

This proposal did not satisfy the Free Church Committee. It would not, in their judgment, meet the difficulty. Accordingly, they appointed Rev. J. Tait to draw up a statement of the whole matter, analyzing the Annotations and discussing fully the bearings of the entire subject. It was agreed to send this carefully prepared document to the Committee of the Synod of Victoria. However, that Committee wisely declined prolonging the discussion. They assigned good reasons, too. There was no principle involved in the matter at issue, but only a detail in Church administration. And, instead of contending about matters of correspondence with other Churches beforehand, let them wait till cases in question should occur, and then the wisdom of the United Church would determine how best to deal with them. Besides all this, the whole discussion was "based on an elaborate analysis of certain Annotations, of which the Committee, as such, have no knowledge, and for which they are not responsible."

Thus the Gordian knot became untied. The atmosphere again was made more clear. The mountain of threatened danger was over-

topped. These most formidable "Annotations," all in a moment, disappeared like a phantom. They had not been sanctioned by the Committee, far less had they ever been before the Synod. They were destitute of any official or legal consequence. What, then, has all the bother been about? The mass of argument that had been piled up to demolish the "Annotations" was swept away like "the fabric of a vision." The two Committees came to a mutual understanding that the Articles of Union should remain unmodified till, in course of Providence, special cases might arise to which the disputed clauses should apply. Neither the one Synod nor the other had anything to say in the matter, because it was never before them. It was a little tempest only outside the teapot. Nevertheless, the sting remained in the basis, and might cause trouble at any moment. Meanwhile, there is a disposition on both sides to avoid ticklish ground and to go forward towards Union on the basis agreed upon.

How does Union fare at this stage with the United Presbyterians? Have they slipped out of the negotiations altogether, having had no special interest in the discussions respecting the "Memorial and the Annotations?" There can be no doubt that there has been very great discouragement among them on the subject of Union about this beginning of 1855. They were in good hopes that the Free Church would have maintained consistency with her original renunciation of State-support. But she first opened the door for the reception of building sites for Church and manse in September, 1853. And in November, 1854, she still further opened the door for the reception of Government-money for stipends, while on 5th April, 1855, the resolution was confirmed by a greatly increased majority. These decisions on the part of the Free Church Synod gave the United Presbyterian Church clearly to see that, in the event of Union, practical reception of State-help, instead of practical voluntaryism, would be the predominating feature of the general Body. The backward movement of the Free Church brethren in the matter had the appearance of adding strength to the advocates of Government-aid to Churches in the community. Their sinister action lessened the probability of a speedy termination to the evil system of indiscriminate, at the same time partial and unfair, grants to religious sects.

The United Presbyterians, therefore, felt not a little discomfited by their brethren of the Free Church having retraced their steps in a matter which was vital to them. The United Presbyterian Church had no reason for existence as a separate Denomination in the Colony, except for the maintaining of her distinctive voluntary principles, and using every means to secure the abolition of the whole system of State-endowments to religious persuasions. In receding from a full and decided testimony against the unscriptural system of supporting truth and error alike, brethren with whom they were seeking to be united could not fail to touch a vital chord in the United Presbyterian system. The amount of money granted

by the Legislature for the maintenance of contradictory systems, had risen from £6,000 to £30,000. And when the new Constitution Act came into operation, at the end of the year 1855, the amount was indeed greatly enlarged. The sum set apart for teaching one class of the community to pull down what another built up, by the 53rd clause of the new Constitution, became no less than £50,000. This amount, besides, was not an annual grant dependent on the vote of the Legislature, but *a primary charge upon the revenue.* The Legislature, with the consent of the Crown, might alter or abrogate the clause. But the United Presbyterians were, in virtue of their distinctive opinions, called to aid public movements, whose object was to bring to an early termination the whole obnoxious system. A number of Free Church brethren, too, joined, both by speeches and petitions, in seeking the same overturn. The Free Church Synod itself petitioned for the abolition.

Committed, then, as the United Presbyterian Church were, both by theory and practice, to seek the abolition of endowments of such an objectionable character, it would not have been surprising if, after what had transpired in the Free Church Synod, they had abandoned all further efforts at Union. But they were sincere and earnest in their desires for Union, and were not willing to abandon their efforts to find out, if possible, a way for the three Bodies becoming one. Moreover, no one in the community doubted that State-aid would sooner or later cease and determine. It might require very strenuous efforts, but everyone, friend or foe, believed that the system was doomed. The days of Church-dependence on the State, or years at most, were numbered. Besides, Union of itself is a bright scriptural grace, to which Jesus Christ has given great prominence, and on which he promised to pour out His richest blessing. Independently, therefore, of its surroundings—in spite of discouragements—the Union of brethren so closely allied was recognized as at once a privilege and a duty. Efforts, therefore, to secure a Union that would be scriptural, and would not involve a compromise of principle, could not be allowed to cease.

Moreover, the United Presbyterian Church, in March, 1855, received an important accession to the ministerial ranks. The Rev. Messrs. James Ballantyne, John Ballantyne, and A. D. Kininmont arrived at this time, when negotiations had reached an important stage. The Rev. Hugh Darling, in April, and Rev. John Cooper, in May, also came to the help of the brethren. With these important accessions to the ministerial strength of the United Presbyterian Body, it would have been unwise to close abruptly all further Conference on Union with the other sections. These brethren might materially assist in deliberative council, and in discovering, or at least attempting to discover, a solution of difficulties.

On the 26th April, 1855, therefore, the United Presbyterian Synod made an earnest effort to find a basis, not simply of federation, but even of Union among the three Denominations. It was reported—"That there had been forwarded to the Synod of Victoria, and to the Free Church Synod, copies of the deliverances of this Synod, adopted

in November, on the subject of the respective negotiations with these Bodies; and that their Synods had met and had the subject of Union before them, but as yet no further communication had come from either Synod." The truth was that, while the Synods had met, they found that no progress had been made in the way of Union. The two Committees had been too much engrossed with the "Memorial" and "Annotations." There was a pretty strong feeling of mutual distrust in regard to the interpretation and application of the phraseology of the basis. Hence they were not much in the mood, if they had been in a position, to offer any fresh solution of the difficulties relating to the United Presbyterians. They had decidedly refused acceptance of the resolutions of November.

The United Presbyterian Synod then, if disposed to prosecute the negotiations, must propose a fresh basis. There were two reasons why another attempt should be made to find a common ground on which they could consistently stand. First, the brethren were assured that all parties were sincerely desirous of effecting the threefold Union; and, second, it was known that a number of leading ministers in the other two Synods, who were deeply interested in the subject, had expressed a hope that this Synod should not rise without endeavouring to devise some basis on which a speedy and satisfactory Union might be accomplished. The Synod accordingly entered heartily into a consideration of the whole subject, and after much reasoning adopted the following resolutions :—

1. "That inasmuch as the three Presbyterian Denominations are one in Doctrine, Discipline, and Church Government, and inasmuch as the Confession of Faith is the received and acknowledged compendium of their doctrinal belief and worship, said Confession of Faith be the doctrinal basis of the proposed Union, except in so far as said Confession teaches, or is supposed to teach, persecuting and intolerant principles.

2. "That, in the exercise of charitable and prudent regard to the interests and arrangements entered into prior to the Union, those ministers and Churches at present in receipt of Government-aid shall not be required to forego the same without their own consent.

3. "That, in the matter of Churches originated after the Union shall have been consummated, should any propose to apply for Government assistance, it shall be competent for the United Synod to decide as to whether or not they shall receive it.

4. "That the right to expound and discuss on all suitable occasions the principle of Government interference and aid in the cause of religion be reserved to all parties; but that the ministers of the united body shall agree to avoid all unnecessary severity in such discussions, and shall conduct them in a spirit of liberality, forbearance, and Christian love."

These resolutions were forwarded to the Moderators of the other two Synods. There was no meeting, however, of either Synod till November. And the United Presbyterian Synod would meet in the last week of October. During the interval the Union Committees held earnest conferences with one another. There was a greater disposition now apparent to grapple with the peculiar difficulties of the United Presbyterians. Up to this stage, the voluntary views respecting the province of the Civil Magistrate in affairs of the Church,

and affecting the grants from Government, were viewed at a distance. They were troublesome and unpalatable, and were even regarded with suspicion as if bordering on, if not altogether, 'heretical.' But if there was any real desire on the part of the two State-support approving bodies that the United Presbyterian Church should form a component part of the Union, then they must come face to face with the conscientious views of the third party, and, if possible, meet them. The state of the negotiations between the bodies receiving State-help was such as to afford leisure for considering the voluntary scruples as they were esteemed. Their conferences with each other for a time were at a stand-still. This appears from the report presented in January, 1855, by the Union Committee to the Synod of Victoria. It was to the effect as follows:—

"That the opinion of Counsel had not yet been received on the question submitted, at the instance of the two Bodies, as to the effect of their Union on their respective Church properties."

Upon the reception of this report, it was agreed—

"That, until that opinion was received, no further steps for Union could be taken."

The three Committees then improved their opportunity of holding frequent conferences. At the first of these Rev. Mr. Ramsay gave an account of the four resolutions which the Synod had adopted in April. These were freely criticised, but not with favour. They would not satisfy at all. The voluntary element in them was too strong, and the other two Committees could not brook the idea of binding themselves to shun in the United Body needless severity in discussing points on which they should have agreed to differ. They considered it out of the question that they should pledge themselves when dealing with critical and delicate points, to do so in brotherly charity and love. Why not pledge? Echo answers why?

The basis proposed by the United Presbyterians not being entertained, the discussion turned on the old basis, on which the Synod of Victoria and the Free Church had come to an agreement. This gave the United Presbyterian brethren occasion to state their objections to the old basis. And one benefit of their discussing these objections was the superseding ultimately of the old basis, with its objectionable and dangerous elements, and the adoption of a new one.

Accordingly the United Presbyterian Committee objected to the second article. It was anti-voluntary. It claimed a power for the Civil Magistrate in dealing with religious matters, which they repudiated. They proposed, therefore, that the second article should be cancelled, and that the first should be modified to the following effect:—

"That the Westminster Confession, &c., be the Standards of this Church; but that in subscribing the said Confession the ministers and elders of this Church are not to be understood as possessing any views inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment, or in any way countenancing persecuting and intolerant principles."

This proposed change in the basis could not be entertained without further consideration. It was agreed, therefore, to remit the modification suggested to the other two Committees for their separate deliberation and decision.

In the following month of July, 1855, the three Committees met and compared notes. Little or no progress could be ascertained. Various efforts were made to produce harmony, but it could not be effected. The Committees met more than once, and tried to secure a threefold agreement, but to no purpose. The United Presbyterians could hardly understand why the other Committees would not accept a use of phraseology with which they were familiar in the Standards of the parent Church in Scotland. The distinguishing feature of the United Presbyterian Church of the old country, and the ground of its separate existence, was a belief that the teaching of the Confession of Faith on the duty of the Civil Magistrate distinctly implies a principle of intolerance and even of persecution. And the representatives of this Church in the Colony were careful in Union negotiations not to act so as to be chargeable with any dishonourable compromise. On the other hand, the representatives of the other Presbyterian sections were most reluctant to admit that there was any part of the teaching of the Confession of an intolerant or a persecuting character. They had never seen it in this light. They had never put on the spectacles of voluntaryism. It seemed like slandering an old and illustrious friend to speak of the Scottish Standards as having any tinge of a persecuting spirit within their covers. Hence they could come to no common understanding.

On 1st November, 1855, the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church met. In the course of business, the Rev. I. Hetherington, Moderator of the Synod of Victoria, appeared, and presented a request that this Synod should meet with his own Synod and that of the Free Church, at Geelong, on Tuesday afternoon next, 6th inst. The request as presented in writing was as follows :—

"MELBOURNE, 1st November, 1855.

"Rev. and Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of an extract minute of your Synod, of date May last, on the subject of Union, and shall have great pleasure in submitting it to the Synod of Victoria at its next meeting.

"In consequence of the encouraging aspect which the negotiations for Union have recently assumed, it has been considered exceedingly desirable that there should be a Conference of the three Synods, with a view to so important a consummation, on as early a day as possible. The Free Church Synod are to meet at Geelong on Tuesday next, and after communication with leading members of that body, I have convened the Synod of Victoria to meet them on the same day, for the purpose of conferring with them in reference to Union. And I would most respectfully request that you would apprise your Synod of the proposed meeting, and suggest the propriety of their taking part with them on the occasion.—I am, Rev. and Dear Sir, yours faithfully,

"I. HETHERINGTON,
"Moderator of the Synod of Victoria."

The Rev. D. M'Donald, Convener of the Union Committee of the Free Church, also appeared in Synod and preferred the request that this Synod should meet in conference at Geelong on Tuesday next,

with the other two sections of Presbyterians. At the same time, Mr. M'Donald laid on the table of this Synod a paper containing the deliverance of the Union Committee of this Synod on the subject of Union. This paper purported to be an effort to solve the United Presbyterian difficulty in reference to the basis. The Free Church Committee did not accept the solution proposed by the United Presbyterian Synod at their meeting in April, and the following was suggested in its stead:—

"That the Westminster Confession of Faith, &c., be the Standards of this Church, but that any minister or elder of the United Presbyterian Church, who disapproves of those portions which treat of the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion—viz., Third section, the xxiii. chapter of the Confession of Faith, and the answer to the 191st Question of the Larger Catechism—shall be held to subscribe them subject to the exclusion of the said portions."

The United Presbyterian Synod agreed to reconsider their decision of April last, and also to adjourn to meet at Geelong on 6th November, in Ryrie-street United Presbyterian Church.

Having met at Geelong according to adjournment, the United Presbyterian Synod, in view of the conference, considered the paper laid on the table by Mr. M'Donald as the emanation of the Free Church Committee. After full discussion the Synod agreed to declare—

"That the proposition submitted by said Committee does not meet the exigency of the case, inasmuch as it limits the right of subscribing the Standards, subject to the exception of said portions, to the ministers and elders of one section of the Presbyterian Body, instead of recognizing the right of taking such exceptions as a general and permanent principle of the Union."

The Synod further agreed to submit to the conference of the three Synods this evening, the following proposition as expressing the deliberate mind of the brethren on the subject of subscription to the Standards:—

"That the Westminster Confession of Faith, &c., be the Standards of the Churches, but those ministers and elders who do not approve of the statements contained in the xxiii. chapter of said Confession, and in answer to the 109th and 191st Questions of the Larger Catechisms, or in other portions of the said Standards which relate to the duty and power of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion, shall be held as subscribing these Standards subject to the exclusion of said portions; and further, that this right of taking exception to such portions be expressly stated in the ordination Formula."

The Conference was held on the evening of the 6th November.

The two Conveners of Committees on Union, then—of the Synods of Victoria and of the United Presbyterian Church—having stated the resolutions which their Synods respectively had adopted at the separate meetings held at an earlier hour of the day, a lengthened and earnest discussion ensued. The proposition of the United Presbyterians was accepted by the Synod of Victoria as a satisfactory solution of the difficulty relating to the exceptions in the subscription to the Confession. The Free Church brethren would

not, by any force of reasoning, make the least concession to the United Presbyterian conscience. It appeared almost as if their only condition of Union with the voluntary Presbyterians was that they should renounce their distinctive principles, and swallow undiluted the entire teaching of the Standards in reference to the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate.

The Clerk of the Free Church Synod relates the result of the Conference in the following succint manner :—"After long deliberation and discussion, the Conference closed with prayer."

On the following day, 7th November, the Free Church Synod resumed. Rev. Mr. M'Donald brought forward the report of the Committee on Union with the United Presbyterian Church, and read the final deliverance come to by that Church Synod on the previous day. The discussion that followed was anything but favourable to the United Presbyterian claims to have their distinctive principles recognised in the basis. The leading speakers considered that the United Presbyterian brethren misunderstood the Confession when imputing to it a construction of intolerance and persecution; that these friends wished them to infringe the Standards of the Church and of her reforming ancestors; that they were seeking modifications of the Confession which would tend to loosen the obligations of the Word of God, the ties of marriage, and the sanctification of the Lord's Day; that they were trying to introduce dangerous innovations; and therefore that it was hardly possible to entertain the idea of Union with them.

The following deliverance was agreed to :—

"After a long and anxious deliberation, the Synod are unanimously of opinion that they cannot agree to the terms embodied in that minute; but that, with the view of making another effort for the accomplishment of the great object which they have so much at heart, they appoint a Committee to ascertain if the United Presbyterian Synod cannot be brought back to the terms on which they originally proposed to go into this Union, and to draw up a narrative of the whole subject, the following ministers to form the Committee :—The Moderator (the Rev. D. M'Donald), Rev. Dr. Mackay, Rev. Mr. Tait, Rev. Mr. Divorty."

The strong language used at this meeting, when it appeared in print next day, gave serious offence to United Presbyterians, and led to some controversial writing in the press. The discussion then, at this meeting, did not bode well for harmony and Union.

At the same meeting (7th) the Rev. Dr. Lillie, from Hobart Town, appeared as a delegate from the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania to express sympathy with the movement towards a general Union among Presbyterians in Victoria, and also to prepare the way, if possible, for the Tasmanian Presbyterians becoming part of the united body.

The Free Church Synod expressed the high gratification it afforded them to find, "That the Presbytery to which Dr. Lillie belonged were so explicit and decided in declaring their adherence to the great principles of the Headship of Christ, the spiritual independence of this Church, and the rights and privileges alike of her rulers and

people, for which this Church has always contended, and recognising in this document a sound doctrinal basis of Union with the Free Presbytery of Tasmania, they rejoice to learn that Dr. Lillie and his brethren are ready to take steps for securing such a change in the existing Act of the Tasmanian Legislature, in which their Body is designated 'The Church of Scotland in Van Diemen's Land,' as would remove all real, or supposed, connection with or dependence on the Church of Scotland as established by law . . . . resolve to communicate with the Free Church brethren in Tasmania on the subject, and to enter into friendly correspondence and relations with both Presbyteries, with a view to further this most desirable result."

The Moderator, Dr. Cairns, Dr. Mackay, and Mr. Tait were appointed a Committee to carry this into effect.

There were special difficulties, however, in the way of realising the much-desired Union with the Presbyterian Church of Tasmania. One of the chief of these was the legalised connection of the Tasmanian Presbyterians with the Established Church of Scotland. The Union was never consummated. And, strange to say, the other Tasmanian Presbytery, which was thoroughly identified with the Free Church of Scotland, expressed no sympathy and held no correspondence with their brethren in Victoria, who were so much engrossed with Union negotiations. Indeed, the Victorian Free Church was regarded as unfaithful to Christ, if not grossly heretical, because, amongst other evils, she sanctioned the use of instrumental music in public worship.

By the pre-concerted arrangement, the different Synods having met at Geelong on the 6th and the 7th November, further attempts were made to secure a basis on which all should agree. The three Synods met separately on the earlier parts of the day.

At the morning meeting (6th) of the Synod of Victoria, in the Scots Church, Geelong, previous to reporting on Union, it was stated—"That Counsel, to whom the Memorial relative to the civil effect of the proposed Union was submitted, had recommended that a new Temporalities Act should be obtained from the Legislature for the protection of the properties of the respective Churches, and that a sub-committtee had accordingly been appointed from the two Committees to prepare a draft of a Bill in terms of these instructions."

On the subject of Union the Convener, the Rev. I. Hetherington, reported that frequent Conferences had been held with the Union Committee of the United Presbyterian Church, and that it had been found that, to meet the special demands of that body, the first and second of the Articles of Union, agreed upon with the Free Church, would require to be modified as follows, viz. :—

"That the Westminster Confession of Faith, &c., be the Standards and Formulas of this Church, but that any minister or elder who disapproves of those portions of the said Standards which treat of the powers and duties of the Civil Magistrate in reference to religion, viz.—the third section of the xxiii. chapter of the Confession of Faith, and the seventh clause in the answer to the 191st Question in the Larger Catechism, shall be held as subscribing these Standards, subject to the exclusion of said portions."

After considerable discussion the Synod of Victoria agreed to entertain these modifications. At 8 o'clock on the evening of the same day, the Synod of Victoria and the Free Church Synod of Victoria met by appointment in the Scots Church—Rev. Mr. Love's.

"The Conveners of the Committees on Union directed the attention of the brethren to a draft of the Bill proposed to be submitted to the Legislative Council to alter the Act regulating the temporal affairs of the Church."

A joint committee was appointed, "to take steps for having the Bill passed through the Legislative Council and watching over it."

The brethren were overjoyed at the progress made towards the consummation of the Union. The Rev. Mr. Clow led them in prayer, giving thanks to God.

At a later hour, 9 o'clock in the same evening, the three Synods met for Conference on Union in the Free Church, Malop-street. The Rev. James Clow was called to the chair. The several Conveners of the Union Committees were called upon to bring the subjects of Conference before the meeting.

The Rev. I. Hetherington reported—"That the Synod of Victoria had agreed on a form of the Article (recorded above) respecting which there had already been so much discussion."

The Rev. A. M. Ramsay "submitted an extract from the Records of the United Presbyterian Synod, as containing their deliberate mind on the point in question." That was as related above.

The Rev. Donald M'Donald reported—"That the Union Committee of the Free Church had scarcely time to submit their report to the Synod before the hour appointed for this Conference arrived, and there being thus no opportunity of deliberating on the matter, no deliverance had been given."

On the 7th November the Synod of Victoria resumed its business. After considerable discussion on the subject of the Conferences on the preceding evening, the attention of the Synod was called to a report in the *Geelong Advertiser* of the following statement, made by Dr. Mackay at the Free Church Synod the day before :—"There seemed to be a popular prejudice against Union with the Established Church, on the plea of their going backwards, but of a truth, instead of their going back to the Established Church, the members of the Established Church were coming over to them."

The Rev. Dr. Lillie, of Hobart Town, being present as an associated member, stated that he had communicated with Dr. Mackay on the subject of this paragraph, and was authorized by him to state—"That, in employing the language attributed to him, he did not mean to identify the Synod of Victoria with the Free Church of Scotland, or to affirm that the former was coming over to the Free Church of Victoria, but simply that the principles held by the Free Church are held in common by the Free Victorian Church and by the Synod of Victoria; and that those who come from the Established Church of Scotland and join on such a basis come over to what he considers

to be essentially Free Church ground." The Synod, in their usual forward spirit of conciliation, agreed to accept the explanation.

On the evening of the same day, the Synod of Victoria and the Synod of the Free Church met again in Conference in the Malop-street Free Church. The Rev. Dr. Lillie, being present, was asked to take part. After long and serious deliberation, it was unanimously resolved—"That immediate arrangements be made for consummating the Union, as soon as further negotiations had been held by each of the Synods now in Conference with the United Presbyterian Synod, and that the Moderators of the respective Synods call a meeting for that purpose as soon as possible thereafter."

On 19th November, 1855, the Union Committees of the Synod of Victoria and of the Free Church met. The Committees considered what modifications of the Articles of Union should be made to meet the views of the United Presbyterian Synod. The following alteration of the first and second Articles, it was resolved, should be proposed to that body :—

"That the Westminster Confession, &c., be the Standards and Formulas of this Church, but that in subscribing the said Standards and Formulas, in so far as they relate to the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion, the office-bearers of this Church are not to be understood as countenancing any persecuting or intolerant principles, or as professing any views contrary to liberty of personal conscience and the right of private judgment."

On the 5th December the Union Committee of the United Presbyterian Church considered this modification, and agreed on the following reply :—

"The Committee agree to convey to their brethren of the two aforesaid Committees their general approval of the above modification of Articles, as being much nearer their views than the proposition lately submitted by the Free Church Union Committee, and as calculated in their opinion to forward the general Union of the Presbyterian Bodies in the Colony. The Committee, however, could not be satisfied unless something equivalent to the Article, as now amended, were also inserted in the ordination Formula ; and they cannot think of any phraseology less exceptionable, or more likely to approve itself, on calm and deliberate reflection, than that employed in the ordination Formula of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and which this Committee originally proposed at an early period of these Union negotiations, viz.—that the office-bearers shall be understood not to be required to approve of anything in these documents which teaches, or is supposed to teach, compulsory or persecuting and intolerant principles in religion."

On 20th December this solution was submitted for the consideration of the Synod of Victoria by the Union Committee. Mr. Hetherington, the Convener, recommended the adoption of the proposed modification, but the Synod judged it expedient not to act independently, but rather suspend their judgment on the proposal now submitted until they should meet in Conference with the Synod of the Free Church.

On the 18th December the Free Church Synod met and considered the report of the Union Committee. It was recommended that the first part of the second Article of Union should be omitted, and then the first and second Articles combined in one ; and that the

Formula should refer to the explanation given in the Article of the power of the Civil Magistrate in regard to religion.

On consideration of the report, three propositions were made for the decision of the Synod. Dr. Cairns moved, and Mr. A. M'Vean seconded, to the effect:—

"That the Synod, having heard the report of their Committee on Union with the United Presbyterian Synod, and having duly considered the same, resolve—That whereas the basis of Union having been framed with a view to guard the testimony of this Church on certain controverted points, the second Article of said basis more especially asserts the obligation of the Civil Magistrate to countenance and cherish the truth of God. And whereas the said Article having been solemnly affirmed at a previous meeting of Synod as a necessary part of divine truth, to expunge it from the basis as now proposed would be a practical abnegation of the doctrine therein contained, and a virtual setting up of voluntary Standards; therefore the Synod retain the second Article in its integrity, as setting forth the Magistrate's duty in regard to religion, and *quoad ultra* approves the Committee's diligence."

An amendment was proposed by Dr. Mackay, and seconded by Mr. Tait—

"That the report of the Committee be approved, and the proposal it contains communicated to the Committee of the United Presbyterian Synod on Union."

A second amendment was proposed by Mr. Miller, and seconded by Mr. Paul—

"That the Synod, having heard the report of the Committee on Union with the United Presbyterian Synod, resolve—That whereas the basis of Union was framed with a view to guard the testimony of this Church on certain controverted points, the second Article of said basis more especially asserts the obligation of the Civil Magistrate to countenance and cherish the truth of God; and whereas the said Article has been solemnly affirmed at a previous meeting of Synod, as a necessary part of divine truth, therefore the Synod retain the second Article in its integrity, and approve the great diligence of the Committee and the care exercised by them in a very difficult and delicate negotiation; but find, upon considering the whole circumstances of the case, that the two Churches are not prepared for an incorporated Union at present, but that they should continue to cultivate friendly relations."

The motion was withdrawn in favour of the second amendment. Two voted for the first amendment and seven for the second, thereby bringing to a close negotiations with the United Presbyterian Church.

On the evening of the 20th December the Synods of Victoria and of the Free Church met in Conference in Chalmers Church, Melbourne, when the chairman, Rev. D. M'Donald, intimated to the Synod of Victoria that the Free Church had rejected the modifications of the first and second Articles of the basis proposed by their Union Committee, and had discharged their Committee from further negotiations with the United Presbyterians. Much regret and disappointment were expressed by members of the Synod of Victoria at the course which had been pursued by the Free Church. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Synod of Victoria should retire to the vestry apart and determine what measures they should adopt in the circumstances.

They proceeded to consider for themselves the modifications proposed, and at the same time the answer respecting them from the Union Committee of the United Presbyterian Church. After deliberation the Synod agreed—

"To express and record their agreement with the modifications of the Articles proposed, and their satisfaction at the intelligence from the Union Committee of the United Presbyterian Church, that these modifications were likely to prove acceptable to the ministers and members of their Body. At the same time they deeply regret that the Free Church, having rejected these modifications at their previous meeting, they were compelled to forego the hope they had indulged of the Union of the three Churches at this juncture."

In these circumstances they resolved—"That, inasmuch as they are bound by the pledge given at their recent meeting at Geelong to unite with the Free Church, they should proceed now with that measure, still looking forward, however, with unabated anxiety to the renewal thereafter of negotiations with the United Presbyterian Church, persuaded that Union with that body also is essentially necessary to the real prosperity of the Presbyterian cause in the Colony."

When the Conference was resumed, the above resolution was communicated to the Free Church.

It was unanimously resolved—"That as both the Synods now in Conference do still in their separate capacity, and according to their constitutional findings, as well as here in concert, adhere to the Articles of Union in all their integrity as formerly agreed upon, the following Committee be appointed to prepare a pastoral address to the people on the subject of the Union, a corrected copy of the Articles to be appended to the said address; and to make arrangements for consummating the Union; and that the two Synods should meet for that purpose at such time and place as may be fixed upon by this Committee, and intimated to the Moderators with a view to their convening their respective Synods."

The Committee consisted of the Rev. James Clow, Rev. Peter Gunn, Rev. Irving Hetherington, and Mr. Kennedy, elder of the Synod of Victoria; and the Rev. Drs. Mackay and Cairns, Rev. John Tait, and Mr. D. Ogilvy, elder of the Synod of the Free Church. Mr. Hetherington, convener.

The Free Church Synod met after the Conference, at 10 o'clock p.m. After reading the minute of the last sederunt and of the Conference, it was unanimously resolved—"That the Synod do record their devout thankfulness to Almighty God that the negotiations for Union had come to such a promising issue; earnestly recommend each of the brethren to make the contemplated Union the subject of increasing prayer, that it may be guided to a right consummation; and that the divine blessing may richly attend it; and, in terms of the resolution of Conferences, authorise the Moderator to convene the Synod at such time and place as may be agreed on by the Joint-Committee, with a view to carry the Union into effect."

To all appearance, at this stage, the negotiations for Union which had been carried on during the period of two whole years were about to result in a twofold rather than a triple amalgamation.

One might well wonder that, where two Christian Bodies like the Synod of Victoria and the Free Church Synod, identical in views of Doctrine, Discipline, and Government, the same in State-aid theory and practice, and both free and independent of all foreign control, there should have been any difficulty in coming into incorporated Union within as many months as years were occupied in arriving at an arrangement. Equally wonderful, too, was it that the Free Church Synod should have manifested such reluctance to understand the distinctive principles of the United Presbyterian Synod, such reserve and impatience in treating with them, and such readiness to cast off all hope of a threefold Union, unless it were at some period in the distant future. It is well to see that the Free Church Synod acknowledged their obligations to be thankful to God for the blessing vouchsafed in bringing partial Union apparently within sight. It would have been still more pleasing if to thankfulness there had been added expressions of sorrow that such painful and long continued efforts should have been necessary to accomplish so practicable a result. Well might the Synod of Victoria express regret and disappointment at the course pursued by the Free Church Synod. And if they were filled with sorrow and disappointment, what reason had the United Presbyterian brethren to be astonished at the treatment given, not so much to themselves as to the sacred cause of Union!

It was not till the 29th of April, 1856, the United Presbyterian Synod held their next meeting. It was imperatively required that they should come to a deliberate judgment on the sudden arrest put on further negotiations with them. Accordingly, after much serious deliberation, it was agreed to record the following judgment on the whole question :—

"The Synod express surprise and regret at the abrupt and unexpected termination of proceedings with a view to Union of the three sections of the Presbyterian Church in this Colony, and especially at the communication of the fact that the Synod of the Free Church in its final deliverance resolved to retain the second Article in its integrity, while, at the same time, the three Committees on Union had agreed upon such a modification of said Article as met the views of the different parties. The Synod, further, are not satisfied with the statement that 'the two Churches are not prepared for an incorporated Union at present,' inasmuch as the United Presbyterian Church is prepared for such Union on the terms agreed upon by the three Committees, and cannot but regard the Free Church as constituting the only obstacle in the way. The Synod yet further submit that they cannot entertain the belief that, at the opening of the negotiations, the Free Church Synod were actually of opinion that the second Article in the basis must be retained in its integrity, inasmuch as this would have required on the part of the United Presbyterian Church the surrender of a great principle, which they have ever held, and a conversion to a principle of an opposite kind; and that, had the members of the United Presbyterian Church known this in time, no step would have been taken with a view to Union, and much time and trouble saved to all parties; and, finally,

the Synod would still express a fervent hope that a result so dear to them and to every Christian may, notwithstanding the present pause in the negotiations, be realised at no distant date."

It might have been expected that we should now be able to chronicle the consummation of the twofold Union without further delay. After the proceedings last recorded, a prophet could hardly have expected to be believed if he had predicted a further procrastination of the Union for over three years. In all the negotiations that have taken place, it is to be feared there has been from the beginning too much of the spirit of the world and of self, and too little of the spirit of love and of God. Hence, the fabric constructed at so great a cost of time and trouble, strange to say, was soon overturned Instead of a beautifully finished temple of unity, the elaborate erection was laid low in fragments. In place of songs of praise and triumph, the adversary was exultant at the sight of fruitless efforts. The story is an instructive one and requires to be told. Let posterity learn from the infirmities of their fathers. The lessons of history are salutary if they are only learned in self-abnegation and wisdom. The ways of Providence are mysterious.

On the 18th December, 1855, the attention of the Free Church Synod was called to the Bill to be submitted to the Legislative Council, with a view to amend the Act No. 19 of April, 1854. Mr. Ogilvy presented a draft which had been drawn up by him, and it was agreed to remit the same to the Committee appointed to prepare the said Bill. Immediately after this, however, Dr. Mackay took ill and was not able to give his attention to public matters. Not only so, Mr. Hetherington was laid up with serious illness for a period of three months. In these circumstances the Bill was neglected, and was not prepared in time to be introduced into the Legislative Council before it was dissolved. The new Constitution Act required the substitution of the bi-cameral Parliament for the old uni-cameral, and hence the substitution of the Upper and Lower Houses for the one Council.

In consequence of this delay, and of internal causes at work in the Free Church, disastrous results ensued. The first open manifestation of a disaffected spirit towards the Union now proposed was at the meeting of Synod on 1st April, 1856. It was expected, after the December meeting, that a *pro re nata* meeting should be held for carrying the Union into effect. The Committee, however, that was authorised to convene extraordinary meetings of the Synods never found themselves in circumstances to do so. Hence, the Free Synod met at their usual time, on 1st April, for the transaction of ordinary business.

At this meeting it was announced by the Moderator, Rev. D. M'Donald, that he had ascertained that the sum of £3,203 3s. 7d. had been apportioned by Government to the Free Church, this being the amount to which they were entitled according to their numbers on the census ; that of this sum the one-half was set apart for assisting in the erection of ecclesiastical buildings, and that he had applied

to have the remaining half distributed equally among the following eleven ministers:—Rev. Messrs. Divorty, M'Vean, Henderson, Simpson, Nish, Paul, Baird, Barnet, Adam, Login, M'Donald.

Immediately after this silvery episode, the signal of dissension was hoisted. It was proposed by Rev. Mr. M'Vean, and seconded by Rev. Mr. Paul—

"That, whereas the question of Union with the Synod of Victoria has for some time engaged the attention of this Church; whereas certain Articles of Union having been agreed upon by this Church and the Synod of Victoria, discrepancies of sentiment have discovered themselves respecting the application of said Articles to other Churches; whereas a Committee was appointed by this Synod at its meeting on 2nd November, 1854, with instructions to confer with a Committee of the Synod of Victoria on the subject of communion and correspondence with the Church of Scotland, which Committee gave in its report to a meeting of the Free Synod, held at Geelong, on 6th November, 1855; whereas it is desirable that the minutes kept by the Committee, together with any other documents bearing on the subject of Union, and more especially such as have reference to the question of communion with other Churches, should be made accessible to all the members of the Church; therefore it is moved—That such documents, and more especially the said minutes of Committee, be laid on the table of the Synod, for the information and satisfaction of the ministers and office-bearers of this Church."

It was shrewdly inferred that no good would result from this movement. And at once "the previous question" was moved and seconded by Rev. Messrs. Hastie and M'Lachlan, which was carried by a majority of six. Rev. Messrs. Paul, Miller, and M'Vean, and Mr. Rennie (elder), dissented.

At the evening meeting of the Synod, Dr. Mackay gave full explanation of the delay that had occurred, through the severe affliction of Mr. Hetherington and himself, in regard to the Bill, the arrangements to consummate the Union, and the issuing and circulating of the pastoral address on the subject of Union. In consideration of Dr. Mackay leaving the Colony, in order to prosecute the work of the ministry in Sydney, Mr. D. M'Donald was appointed to to act in his place.

On 4th November, 1856, Mr. Paul read to the Synod his reasons of dissent from the finding come to, upon the motion of Mr. M'Vean, respecting the production of certain minutes of the Synod's Committee on Union with the Synod of Victoria. The Moderator, Mr. Tait, and Mr. Divorty were appointed to answer them.

At this meeting, Mr. Miller stated that he and other members of Synod had doubts as to going forward to the consummation of the Union with the Synod of Victoria which had been resolved upon, and requested a Conference with the brethren, with the view of stating these doubts and deliberating on the same. It was agreed that such Conference should be held the following morning, at 10 o'clock. The Conference took place and there was full deliberation. A petition was also transmitted by the Free Church Presbytery of Melbourne from John Knox congregation. It had been presented on 7th October, 1856. The petitioners craved information respecting the contemplated Union between this Synod and the Synod of Victoria. A large number of gentlemen appeared as a deputation

in support of the prayer of the petition. After due deliberation the Synod appointed a Committee to give them authoritative information, viz.—the Moderator (Rev. W. Henderson), Dr. Cairns, and Rev. Mr. Tait.

During the whole of 1856 there were no Conferences or meetings between the Synod of Victoria and the Free Church Synod for promoting the consummation of the Union. It is true the terms of Union had been agreed upon, and legislative enactment was looked for to enable the two Synods to amalgamate. How much one would like to have seen the year of waiting occupied by interchange of pulpits, by cultivating fellowship with one another in meetings for mission work, Home and Foreign, for prayer, and for advancing the work of Christ generally, in which they had a common interest. Indeed, throughout the whole five years of negotiation, the spiritual elements of Union seem to have been kept too much out of sight. Special efforts to make the proposed Union one of heart and soul, one of intertwining recognition and love, one of mutual knowledge and esteem—not one of mere paper, pen, and ink—appear to have been much wanted.

The only reference to Union in the records of the two Churches during the entire twelve months was by the Synod of Victoria on 5th December, 1856. Mr. Hetherington, as Convener of the Union Committee, reported—"That, in consequence of his long illness, little progress had been made since last meeting, and that the Committee had still under consideration the draft of a Bill to give civil effect to the Union, to some clauses of which exception had been taken on the part of the Free Church."

In consequence of the wearisome delays with which the Union was prosecuted, a variety of evils began to make their appearance. Instead of Union, the Church at large seemed to be threatened with a torrent of divisions. There were disruptions in the United Presbyterian Church, though altogether independent of the subject of Union. The causes of division here were entirely of a local character. But it is questionable whether these would ever have had room to operate if the Union proposed in 1853 had promptly, and in the spirit of true brotherly forbearance and love, been realised. Indeed, there can be no doubt that the United Presbyterian divisions would never have been heard of, had the Union, when first proposed, been earnestly, and in the right Christian spirit, prosecuted and, within reasonable time, carried into effect. There was no reason for delay. Separation among Presbyterians in the Colony was unreasonable, if not disastrous. The Union of all the sections was a clamant necessity. Union of Presbyterians was emphatically to be strength. Each of the Denominations in itself was weak, and when a question arose as to the right or the wrong of any course, the small body could not afford to be divided. The strength of the whole was weak enough, and a division in that whole made the decision pronounced of little if any weight. The influence of numbers in the working of the free and democratic Constitution of Presbyterianism is of the utmost importance. Decisions in Church Courts

may be ever so sound and scriptural, regular and right, but if declared by a very small majority, in cases where the majority and minority together are small, how little weight they must carry! Now there was ample time—superabundance of it—from 1853 to 1857 to have accomplished the Union over and over again. In that case, the United Presbyterians would assuredly have found a comparatively easy method of settling all their difficulties, and consequently avoiding disruption.

Into the details of these divisions it would be altogether impracticable to enter. Nor would any good purpose be served by doing so. From a variety of causes, it may be simply stated that Rev. A. D. Kininmont was separated from the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria on 24th April, 1856. The Rev. D. Chapman resigned connection with the Synod on 24th September, 1856. On 4th October following, these two brethren formed themselves into a Presbytery, in connection with the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The Rev. James Ballantyne and Rev. William Jarrett resigned connection with the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria on 28th October, 1856. Rev. John Ballantyne resigned 29th December, 1856. The Rev. John Cooper resigned on 27th August, 1857, and severed his connection with the Geelong congregation on 1st November following. These brethren, with Messrs. James Bennie and John Watson, formed themselves into the United Presbyterian Synod of Australia, adopting the Standards of the Home Church as the basis of the Synod.

One cause of this serious division was a difference of opinion as to what constituted the real basis of Doctrine, Discipline, and Government of the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria. At the original formation of the Synod on 18th January, 1850, a Summary of doctrine, consisting of eleven distinct articles, besides a Summary of ordinances and Church polity, with ten fundamental principles, were adopted as the Constitution on which the voluntary Presbyterian Church should launch into existence in the new Colony. One of the ministers, Rev. W. Jarrett, who joined in the formation of the Synod, had been an Independent, was not familiar with the Presbyterian Standards, and was not quite prepared to intelligently subscribe them. It was thought expedient to make a new departure, in simplifying the door of admission into connection with the Church, so as not unnecessarily to exclude those who might wish to join provided they were well-educated Christian Ministers furnishing credible testimony, but who were not so fully instructed in the knowledge of the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms as to be able to subscribe to their entire teachings. That Summary was in the hands of the Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh, as soon as possible after the formation of the Synod, as early indeed as 1851. They found no fault with it whatever, but considered the brethren on the spot were the best judges of what the circumstances of the Colony required. Accordingly, in the year mentioned, after having deliberated on the Summary, the members of

the Board, all sagacious, enlightened, and sound divines, expressed their satisfaction, and sent out a minister that year to join the Colonial Synod, and all the others whom they sent, up till the Union of 1859, had the same instructions.

At the same time, while the Summary was originally adopted as the initiatory Constitution, it was by no means intended to supersede the old Standards of Presbyterianism. In fact, the Summary remained practically an unrecognised document. No appeal was ever made to it as an authority. No minister on his admission to the Church, at his ordination, or at his induction was asked to subscribe to its statements. It was to all intents and purposes treated as a dead letter, and the old Standards on all occasions assumed the ascendancy. These were both tacitly regarded, and were at all times openly recognised, as the authoritative rules both of belief and of duty. The very names "Synod" and "United Presbyterian," which were adopted at the inception of the Body, clearly indicated the design of the founders that the Church should be Presbyterian, and should be identified with the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Then in all the ordinations and inductions of ministers to pastoral charges, the Formula of Questions used by the parent Church in Scotland was invariably used in the Colony from the foundation of the Synod. The first United Presbyterian congregation formed in Collins-street, Melbourne, was based expressly on the Confession of Faith and other Standards of the Church of the same name in Scotland. The foundation stone of a new United Presbyterian Church was laid in Napier-street, Collingwood, on 31st December, 1849, and it was publicly announced that the basis would be the same as that of the Collins-street Church. The Rules and Forms of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland were recognised as the model of procedure, acted upon by her namesake in the Colony. During all the negotiations for Union with the other Presbyterian Bodies in 1854-5-6-7, it was again and again recorded, as an admitted and unquestionable fact, that "the three Presbyterian Demoninations are one in Doctrine, Discipline, and Church Government," and that "the Confession of Faith is the received and acknowledged compendium of their doctrine, belief, and worship."

In these circumstances the statement, which has been publicly made, to the effect that, in the summary referred to, there was "a repudiation of all Standards of Doctrine, Discipline, and Government, except the New Testament," is far too strong and sweeping. There is nothing in the summary to justify the statement. The unguarded comment is evidently founded on the clause in the Summary which declares that "the appeal of this Church in all matters of controversy affecting the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and Government of the Christian Church is to the written Word of God, and to that alone." In this clause, or anywhere else in the Summary, there is not a syllable to warrant the assertion that the Confession and other Standards are positively set aside. All that was evidently intended by this clause was that the Word of God is the Supreme Standard, the ultimate authority, and the infallible rule by which to determine

Doctrine, Discipline, and Government. The Confession of Faith, and other official documents, claim for themselves no higher rank than that of subordinate Standards. The Confession itself appeals to Scripture to determine whether its teaching is true, and all Presbyterians admit that, in matters of controversy, the final appeal is to the Word of God, and that alone is the Supreme Arbiter.

Looking, then, to all the circumstances of the case, and especially to the constant use made of the Presbyterian Standards and Forms as the rule of procedure by the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria, it cannot be just or right to represent her as repudiating that which she was constantly avowing and exemplifying. The practice of a Church must be the best interpreter of her principles. The tree is usually judged by its fruit.

The Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church in Edinburgh, having learned that some of the separated brethren entertained strong feeling on the subject of the original basis, "recommended all the brethren to overlook and forget the past, to adopt formally the Standards of the Home-Church and her forms of procedure as far as they were applicable; and to declare, that while they are as a Synod independent in their jurisdiction, yet they are in communion with the Home Synod, and are prepared to receive their regularly attested ministers, preachers, and members, and to give them, when asked to do so, a standing in their Church similiar to that which they had at Home."

Having received this Christian and brotherly counsel, correspondence was opened between the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria and the separated brethren with a view to the re-moulding of the whole into one compact Body. But there was too much feeling to admit of a ready or full compliance with the earnest and fatherly advice from Home. The counsel was followed in regard to the adoption of the Home Standards, but unfortunately re-union was not effected.

In an official note from Rev. Andrew Somerville, Secretary to the Mission Board, Edinburgh, to the Clerk of Synod, Melbourne, explanatory of the circular letter addressed to all the brethren, he wrote urging in earnest terms the full adoption of the Board's recommendations. He said—"We do not suggest that you dissolve your Synod, and then build it up, but that you resolve to accept our Standards, and to unite with your separated brethren on that basis. Give your influence and your exertions to this good work. Blessed is the peacemaker."

This letter of 11th June, 1857, reached Melbourne on the 15th August. At the first meeting of Synod on 27th and 28th October, the recommendation of the Home Mission Board was carried into effect in the following terms:—

"Whereas it has been the regular practice of this Synod in the organisation of Churches, settlement of ministers, and other business, to use the forms of procedure employed by the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland . . . Nevertheless it has been recently denied by some that this Synod ever adopted and avowed the Standards of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland.

The Synod, therefore, to remove all existing doubts, and to prevent any future misconception on this subject, hereby enacts and declares that the Standards of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland are the Standards of this Church, and the sole doctrinal basis of ministerial fellowship in this Synod; and that the rules and forms of procedure used by the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland are recognised by this Synod as our rules and forms of procedure, as far as they are applicable to the circumstances of the Church in this Colony. . . . Further, this Synod is an independent Body, owning no human authority or jurisdiction beyond itself, but subject to Christ, the Great Head of the Church, alone. Yet are the members of this Synod in Christian and ministerial communion with the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and, as heretofore, since the formation of this Body, will receive their regularly attested ministers, preachers, and members, and give them a standing in this Church similar to that which they had at Home."

Various vigorous efforts were made by the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria to carry into effect the recommendation of the Mission Board as to re-union, but in vain. Correspondence was entered into, and personal conferences were held on the 2nd and the 3rd November, 1857, but steps had been taken by the separated brethren which could not be easily retraced, and various complications had sprung up, forming a tangled skein which could not well be unravelled, and seemed to render hopeless all attempts at re-union. Nothing remained to be done but to await patiently the events in Providence which, it was confidently expected, would sooner or later bring into a compact Body, in spite of all the weaknesses and follies of man, the scattered fragments of the Presbyterian Church.

The great pending question of the general Union was not altogether lost sight of during 1857, though it was pretty nearly so, as far as the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria was concerned. Indeed, this Synod was precluded by the action of the Free Church from taking any further step in the matter. The Synod of Victoria, however, were very decided that the United Presbyterians should not, if possible, be excluded from the negotiations. Accordingly, in the spirit of earnest effort on behalf of a general Union, in spite of existing discouragements, the Rev. A. Love wrote to Rev. A. M. Ramsay on 23rd July, 1857, to the following effect :—

"Rev. and Dear Sir,—At a meeting of the Synod of Victoria, held yesterday, a committee was appointed to take such steps as might be deemed necessary to bring the subject of Union again under the consideration of your Synod and ours. And I have to request, as a favour, that you would have the goodness to bring the matter before your Synod with as little delay as possible, and let me know when it would be convenient to meet us in Committee."

This letter was brought under the consideration of Synod at their meeting on 3rd November, 1857. After full deliberation—

"It was resolved to re-appoint the Melbourne Presbytery a committee to confer with the Committees of the Synod of Victoria and of the two branches of the Free Presbyterian Church in this Colony; and that the clerk be instructed to write to the Rev. A. Love, expressing the continued desire of this Synod for a general Union of all Presbyterian Bodies in the Colony on scriptural grounds."

After receiving Mr. Love's letter, the Synod did not meet till

2nd November. Neither did the Synod of Victoria meet till the 2nd November. At this date there had not been time to resume practical negotiations. The Convener of the Union Committee of the Synod of Victoria reported unfavourably, before the United Presbyterian Synod had time to take action in the matter. And so their Committee was abruptly discharged. The United Presbyterians were not surprised, and were not disappointed at the decision, because their expectations of any general Union, based on true Christian sympathy and mutual love, were by no means sanguine. The Synod, therefore, having been so much discouraged by the efforts of the past, and by the sad state of division and disruption which had manifested itself both in the Free and United Presbyterian Churches, took no further part in their collective capacity in Union negotiations.

CHAPTER X.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH A VIEW TO UNION—Continued—1857-1858.

The year 1857 was most disastrous to the cause of the long-sought Presbyterian Union. It was not only among the United Presbyterians that division appeared—division also manifested itself in a very serious form in the Free Church. The former would have been undoubtedly prevented had the general Union been only consummated at a reasonably early period. The same may be affirmed of the latter, though the two disruptions were based on different grounds. In the case of the Free Church dis-union, it is unquestionable that the procrastinating character of the whole negotiations gave scope to a spirit of morbid criticism. Time and opportunity were afforded to the minds of brethren, disposed to be exceedingly jealous of the honour of the Free Church of Scotland, to examine very closely, and in a highly sensitive spirit, every clause and every word of the basis proposed to be adopted for a general Union. After 1843, the state of feeling in reference to communion with the Established Church of Scotland among all Free Churchmen was of a highly electrical character. Hence the exceeding caution which they displayed in dealing with the Synod of Victoria, lest she should stand in any way connected with the Scottish Establishment, and thus the Free Church in the Colony should become subject to blame from the parent Church. There can be no doubt that the fear of censure from the distinguished leaders of the Free Church in Scotland was continually before the eyes of the leaders in the movement for Union in Victoria. And surely no reasonable man had any grounds for charging the Free Church with undue toleration in framing the basis of Union, as if it leaned too much either to Erastianism on the one hand, or to Voluntaryism on the other. The only feasible reason that can be assigned for the disaffection that unexpectedly sprung up in the Free Church is that by an unhealthful spirit of brooding over the proposed Union with those who were offensively known in Scotland as moderates and voluntaries, they would become traitors to their true principles by having any connection with the one or the other.

The spirit of discontentment first showed itself in Synod proceedings on 4th and 5th November, 1856, as already mentioned. On Rev. Mr. Tait, at this meeting, giving in the report of the Committee appointed to answer Rev. Mr. Paul's reasons of dissent, Rev. Dr. Cairns proposed—

"That the Moderator should be instructed to demand from Mr. Paul the minute book of the Synod's Committee on Union with the Synod of Victoria, which he had kept in his possession ever since he acted as clerk to the Committee for a time," and the same having been agreed to and done, Mr. Paul delivered up the book.

There was evidently at this stage the rising up of suspicions, if not alienated feeling among the members of Presbytery, which augured no good for the interests of the contemplated Union.

On the 14th January, 1857, at a *pro re nata* meeting of Synod, the disaffection assumed a more decided and alarming form. It was resolved, in determining the order of business to proceed first to the consideration of Mr. Paul's pamphlet entitled—"A Coalition of Interests not the Unity of the Faith; or, A Review of the Union Negotiations between the Synod of Victoria and the Free Synod of Victoria." The Rev. Dr. Cairns moved, and Rev. T. Hastie seconded—

"That whereas the Rev. Arthur Paul, a minister of this Church, has printed and published a pamphlet containing grave charges of deliberate unfaithfulness and corrupt motives against this Synod, impugning and setting at nought a solemn deliverance unanimously come to by the Court, after a long and protracted negotiation and serious deliberation and prayer, he himself having taken part in these deliberations and negotiations, and being a consenting party to said deliverance, and thereby bringing the authority of this Synod into contempt; and whereas this delinquency is greatly aggravated by the charges he brings against the Synod of Victoria, the Synod with which this Synod is pledged by said deliverance to unite, based in a great measure on documents that were neither honourably obtained nor lawfully kept and used, and are not fairly quoted, resolved—'That the conduct of the said Arthur Paul is worthy of severe reprehension.'"

This proposition naturally brought out to view the full strength of those who had doubts about going forward with the Union, or who were decidedly opposed to its accomplishment. There were two amendments, one justifying the pamphlet and thanking the author, the other admitting that the author had used unguarded expressions, but was not worthy of censure. The motion, however, was carried by a majority of thirteen to five. The author was, therefore, reprehended from the chair, but he refused "to acknowledge his error" or "to retract the offensive expressions." Afterwards he submitted a written declaration, with which the Synod were satisfied, and they expressed thanks to God for the happy issue of a painful matter.

With a view evidently to promote a higher feeling of satisfaction with the intended Union, both among the congregations of the Synod of Victoria and among those of the Free Church, and possibly also to heal the discontentment which had appeared in the Free Synod, the following resolution was unanimously agreed to:—

"That the brethren of this Synod, who are on the Joint-Committee appointed at the last Conference of this Synod with the Synod of Victoria, be instructed specially to confer with the brethren of the other Synod, in addition to the points submitted to them at the meeting of this Synod in April last, as to the state of opinion among their own people, as well as among the people of the Free Church in regard to the relations of the Synod of Victoria to the Established Church of Scotland and the practicability of coming to a more definite and clear understanding on that subject than has hitherto existed."

At the next meeting of the Synod, at Geelong, on 7th April, 1857, when the minutes were read, the Rev. Messrs. Paul, Miller, Max-

well, M'Vean, and M'Dougall, and Mr. Bell (elder) dissented from the minutes as incorrect.

At the opening of proceedings a feeling of solemn interest pervaded the Synod. It was felt that a great crisis had come in the history, not only of Union negotiations, but also of the Free Church herself. Almost the first business entered upon was the attitude of the doubting brethren. Rev. Dr. Cairns therefore proposed, and Rev. Mr. Miller seconded—

"That the Synod do now meet in Conference to consider what is to be done in the circumstances in which they are at present placed, from the doubts which have arisen in the minds of some of the brethren in regard to the consummation of the Union."

This having been unanimously agreed to, strangers immediately withdrew.

A very solemn statement was made by Dr. Cairns, in regard to the peculiar and critical position in which they now stood, and he produced a document to be submitted, with the approval of the Synod, for the consideration of the brethren who were opposed to Union with the Synod of Victoria. The Synod approved and adopted the following document—

I. "That this Synod did solemnly, and deliberately, and unanimously resolve to go into Union with the Synod of Victoria on the terms laid down in the Articles of Union; that, having solemnly and deliberately come to this decision, they entered into a covenant or agreement with the other Synod to consummate the Union on these terms; that they are still impressed with the conviction of the importance and safety of Union on this basis; and both on this account, and on account of their solemn engagements, they are determined to go forward with it.

II. "That there being a minority now opposed to going forward with this Union, and threatening to resist it, the brethren, still adhering to their convictions of the necessity and importance of this Union, and feeling their obligation to adhere to their covenant, are shut up by the very nature of the Presbyterian constitution to require of the minority that, while retaining their own sentiments and views, and recording their dissent so far as they see necessary, they do not actively resist and oppose the carrying out this deliverance and this covenant, or they can no longer be permitted to remain within the Body; and if they conceive that they are shut up by their convictions of duty still to resist and oppose, there is no other course possible in the circumstances without utterly setting at nought the fundamental principles of Presbytery than they retire at once in peace and form a Church according to their own views, or that the painful necessity will be laid on this Synod to assert the authority of the Synod and exercise discipline on those persisting in the divisive and rebellious course."

A statement was made by Rev. W. Miller of his own views, and the views of the brethren acting with him, in resisting the Union, and he submitted a written document in which the proposal they wished to make was expressed. It was agreed, however, to confine attention to the other document at present. After discussion, it was unanimously resolved that this meeting adjourn till the evening, to give the brethren opposed to the Union an opportunity of conferring with one another on the proposal now made to them. The Synod to meet in the evening in private and afterwards in open Court.

At the adjourned meeting, the following paper was given in, signed

by the members of Synod opposed to the Union as their reply to the document submitted to them at the morning meeting :—

"The undersigned members of the Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, having under consideration a proposal for a pacific arrangement between them and the members of the said Synod who are resolved to promote Union with the Synod of Victoria, resolve and propose as follows :—

1. "That, adhering as they do to all the provisions of the fundamental Act of this Synod, they do not concur with, but, on the contrary, repudiate the general views of Presbyterian Church government which this proposal submitted to them assumes.

2. "That, being desirous, nevertheless, equally with the brethren opposed to them, of a pacific arrangement, they concur in the proposal made in the close of the paper, to the effect that the minority withdraw peaceably from the majority of the Synod.

3. "It being provided that all questions, with regard to the property of the several congregations shall be equitably determined by a Joint-Committee, composed of members derived in equal proportions from the majority and minority respectively.

(Signed) "Arthur Paul. John M'Dougall.
William Miller. Wm. M. Bell.
Allan M'Vean. Joseph Thomson.
Andrew Maxwell. Roderick M'Leod."

This proposal being of a specially grave and important character, and requiring the most serious consideration of the brethren, it was agreed to adjourn the Conference till next day.

At the open meeting a number of memorials from congregations were presented to the Synod, praying that the Union agreed upon be consummated without delay. These emanated from the congregations of East Melbourne, Geelong, Williamstown, Emerald Hill, Ballaarat, Buninyong, and the Leigh.

The Rev. Dr. Mackay, formerly of St. Andrew's, Carlton, being present as a deputy from the Synod of Eastern Australia, was called upon to address the Synod. After hearing him, the Synod agreed to express —"Their high satisfaction at seeing him, and with the excellent and appropriate address now made to them ; and to state that it affords them great pleasure to find that he still so decidedly and cordially approves of and supports the Union agreed to and determined on while he was a minister of this Church and a member of this Court, and which the Synod is still determined to abide by and carry out."

On the 8th April, 1857, the Synod met according to adjournment. A motion, consisting of six-and-twenty clauses, was proposed by Rev. Dr. Cairns. The motion was in reality an indictment against the five dissentient ministers, and presented at length the grounds on which it was proposed to cut them off from connection with the Synod. The three elders were excepted from the motion of expulsion because the evidence of their criminal complicity in the divisive course was not complete. The numerous and elaborate reasons why the Synod should come to the painful decision are given in the Appendix (B).

At the close of the reading of the long Bill of charges against the opposing brethren, Rev. John M'Dougall rose and said that he did not desire to follow a divisive or rebellious course in the Synod, and

that his acting as he recently had done was more from want of information, than from his having any desire to oppose the decision of the Court. His name was therefore excepted from the motion. This alteration having been effected, the motion was seconded by Rev. T. Hastie.

Without any discussion on this all-important motion, the Synod agreed to adjourn till the evening, to give the parties concerned time to consider how they should act in the solemn circumstances in which they were placed.

The Synod resumed in the evening. There was no sign of yielding on the part of the disaffected minority. The motion was put and carried unanimously. The four ministers—Rev. Messrs. Miller, Paul, M'Vean, and Maxwell—were declared no longer ministers or members of this Church.

Immediately after this solemn decision, a declaration was read by Rev. W. Miller, and laid on the table, asserting and maintaining that the proceedings of the Synod, and negotiations and deliverances in regard to Union with the Synod of Victoria, and their actions towards himself and brethren in the matter, were in utter violation of the Fundamental Act and Presbyterian Constitution of the Free Church, and adjourning the Synod to meet at John Knox Church, Melbourne, on Tuesday, 14th inst., at 11 o'clock a.m.

After reading the paper, Mr. Miller laid it on the table and retired, followed by those who had signed the document along with him.

The paper read will be found in the Appendix (C).

To this paper were appended not only the names of the four ministers expelled, but also the names of the three elders that had been excepted. The Synod of the majority perceiving this, they resolved unanimously that Messrs. W. M. Bell, J. Thomson, and R. M'Leod (elders) be declared no longer office-bearers or members of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The crisis was exceedingly solemn, and all the members of Synod were profoundly impressed. Instead of Union there was separation ; in place of Presbyterian unity there was division ; in place of Presbyterianism becoming united, consolidated, and extended, it looked as if it would be shattered into fragments. To speak of Union in such circumstances seemed almost like mockery. Is the result of five years' conference with a view to Union, to end in confusion and disorder ? Are the prayers that have been offered up for the fulfilment, in some small measure, of the petition "that they all may be one" to be answered in the opposite way to that intended ? Are negotiations for Union carried on so many years by the shrewdest and most intelligent and talented leaders in the Church to be finished by unhappy disruption, and, may be, by decided antagonism ?

The Free Church Synod of Victoria appointed a Committee to prepare an answer to the statements contained in the paper left on the table by the protesting minority, with a view to counteract the impressions which that paper was calculated to produce.

The Rev. Dr. Lillie, of Hobart Town, being present, was called upon to address the Synod in their present painful experience. He did so, in accordance with a former agreement, expressing his sympathy and conveying the encouraging intelligence that great interest was felt in Scotland, which he had lately visited, in the movement towards Presbyterian Union, and the decided approval of leading ministers of the Free Church there of the Articles of Union proposed to form the basis.

The disruption that had taken place in the Synod of the Free Church occasioned immense anxiety to the majority, who were still resolute in prosecuting Union with the Synod of Victoria. The news of the disastrous occurrence in due course reached Edinburgh, and produced painful impressions, especially on the ministers of the Free Church. Thinking that there might be something faulty in the basis, about a hundred ministers of that Church met in Conference in August to consider the proposed Articles of Union. The result of the discussion was that they were satisfied with the Articles as sound and in harmony with the Constitution of the Free Church. They could find nothing in the basis to justify a disruption in the Colonial Church. The news of this result having reached the Colony, the Free Church majority at once resolved, at a Synodical meeting on 5th November, 1857, to open correspondence with the minority with a view to their re-considering their position and returning to their former fellowship. A Committee was appointed for the purpose, but the effort was unavailing.

At this meeting of Synod it was also agreed, in the great and trying emergency of the Church, to send a deputation to Scotland. The Rev. Dr. Mackay, of Sydney, and the Rev. John Tait, of Geelong, were appointed. And they were exceedingly desirous of a visit from a deputation from Scotland, but this was not found practicable.

On the 14th April, 1857, the Free Presbyterian Synod, consisting of the expelled minority of four ministers and three elders, and claiming to be the true representatives of the Free Church of Scotland, met in John Knox Church, Melbourne. Their first duty, after appointing office-bearers, was to instruct the Clerk to write to Rev. John Tait, of Geelong, requiring him to deliver up all the records belonging to them, and also to authorise the Moderator, Rev. William Miller, to prepare a statement regarding the present position of this Church and transmit it to the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, expressing continued attachment to the principles of the parent Church. A Committee was also appointed to draw up a statement for the information of the people adhering to this Church.

The Rev. William Nicholson (afterwards D.D.), of Hobart Town, was present, and had an opportunity afforded him of addressing the Court. He spoke in warm terms of sympathy and encouragement, and read a letter from Rev. Mr. Lindsay, of Launceston, expressing his entire sympathy with the brethren of this Synod.

It appeared that the Rev. John M'Dougall, of the Gaelic Church, Geelong, did not mean to renounce sympathy with the minority when he declared that he had no idea of rebellion against the Church Courts, and was thereby exempted from the act of excision pronounced by the majority. He had been only six months a member of the Synod, was only partially informed on Union matters, and at the time of the expulsion his mind was not clear on the question of duty. After more full inquiry and deliberation, he decided on casting in his lot with the minority.

On 3rd December, 1857, at a meeting of the Synod of Victoria, the Moderator (Rev. Thomas Craig) reported on Union and produced the draft of a Bill, the object of which was to give legal effect to the Union. The Rev. I. Hetherington and the Rev. Peter Gunn had been introduced to the Free Church Synod, at their meeting on 7th November, to ascertain the mind of that Synod on the sufficiency of the draft. After deliberation, it was resolved to refer it to the Joint-Committee, with instructions to get it passed through the Legislature. The Synod of Victoria adopted the draft, and took steps to have it passed into law as soon as possible.

On 6th January, 1858, however, at a meeting of the Synod of Victoria, it was found that the Bill was still in the hands of the Committee. A *pro re nata* meeting of the Synod was called for the purpose of attending a general Conference of the Presbyterian ministers and elders of the Colony on the subject of Union. Rev. I. Hetherington (Moderator) explained that the draft of the Bill which had been adopted contained an enumeration of the Standards of the United Church that was to be. One of the Standards was "the Articles of Union" formerly agreed upon, and a copy of these would require to be appended to the Bill. It was, therefore, essential to ascertain, before presenting the Bill to the Legislature, whether the Articles were fully and finally accepted by all who should constitute the Union. He knew that the Articles, as they stood, were not acceptable to the United Presbyterian Synod when negotiations with them were broken off. But he was most anxious that, notwithstanding the Free Church Synod had abruptly closed the door against them, while the Synod of Victoria had not, efforts should still be made to keep the door open, and, if possible, to get them incorporated in the Union.

It was not an easy matter to confer now with the different fragments into which the Presbyterians were divided. Hence, negotiations behoved to be carried on rather with individuals than associated bodies, with members of Synods rather than Synods. The United Presbyterian Synod, under so much discouragement, held no further negotiations on Union. The Rev. A. M. Ramsay was absent on a visit to Scotland. Rev. W. Miller, of the Free Church minority, was likely also to go away soon with the same object. Negotiations then could be conducted in a very informal, fragmentary, and unsatisfactory way. And there was not the shadow of a prospect of any Union now gathering all Presbyterians in the Colony in the near future into one body. It appeared certain that the Free

Church minority would stand aloof, and exceedingly probable that the United Presbyterian Synod would more or less maintain its separate identity.

Rev. Mr. Hetherington, however, was resolute in his purpose to obtain as strong a United Presbyterian element as possible in the Union. He, therefore, conferred with the separated brethren, and with all over whom he could exercise persuasive influence, whether united or separate, in order to lead them to an agreement respecting the basis. He had made it his object to ascertain what modification of the proposed basis would satisfy "the United Presbyterian party." And he found that the following construction of the first and second Articles would meet their views :—

"That the Westminster Confession of Faith, &c., be the Standards and Formularies of this Church, but inasmuch as there exists a difference of opinion in regard to the doctrine taught in these Standards relative to the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion, the office-bearers of this Church, in subscribing these Standards, are not to be understood as countenancing any persecuting or intolerant principles, or as holding any views inconsistent with the liberty of personal conscience or the rights of private judgment."

This was substantially what the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria proposed in 1855, which the Synod of Victoria accepted, but which the Free Church Synod rejected. The modification is not now proposed by the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, but by United Presbyterians outside the Synod. The Synod of Victoria, as they did before, now also accept the suggested modification. But will the Free Church Synod agree, in the face of former refusal? They are now in somewhat different circumstances. They have passed through a furnace of trial, and they have had time for reflection.

It is recorded that on the 6th January, 1858, at a meeting of the Free Church Synod, it was proposed and unanimously agreed to—

"That the Synod adopt the recited modification, provided the Synod of Victoria would do the same."

On 7th January, 1858—

"The Synod of Victoria agreed to record their satisfaction with the result of the Conference which had been held, so far as related to the United Presbyterian brethren, by whom and the Free Church the modifications of the Articles, which had been consented to by them, had been adopted, so that the terms of Union with that section might be said to be finally adjusted."

At the meeting of the Free Church Synod the day before, a statement was made showing that the harmony supposed to exist between them and the Synod of Victoria was more nominal than real. While there was little occasion to apprehend a disruption in the Synod of Victoria, yet it was abundantly evident that there was a divided feeling, and that also strongly expressed. There was keen dissatisfaction with the Articles in the basis on certain well-defined points, and unless these were amended, there would be resistance to the accomplishment of the Union.

Dr. Cairns stated to the Synod—"That at a Conference recently held in Melbourne on the general subject of Union, Mr. Hetherington had intimated that Mr. Love, one of the ministers of the Synod of Victoria, and his congregation would resist the carrying into effect of the Union already agreed upon between the two Synods, unless certain alterations were made in the Articles; and it appearing further, from a memorial agreed to by Mr. Hetherington s own congregation, that they also desire the same and some additional alterations."

It appeared that the Scots Church, Collins-street, had memorialised the Synod respecting the alterations they desired. The Synod expressed their concurrence generally with the views expressed in the memorial, and appointed a Committee to treat with the Free Church brethren in regard to the changes required, indicating the passages to which exception was taken, and seeking to have the matter, if possible, satisfactorily arranged.

The Free Church Synod, therefore, deliberating upon the matter came to resolve—

"That the Synod, having solemnly and repeatedly pledged themselves to the Synod of Victoria to go into Union with them on the basis laid down in the said Articles, as fixed and settled, both in Conference together and in Synod separately, do not feel themselves at liberty to entertain the proposal to modify and change the said Articles made by individual ministers and congregations; and that they are still prepared and determined to go forward with the Union on the basis already agreed to; but that such is their deep conviction of the importance of Union, that they would still be prepared to consider any changes that the Synod of Victoria might find necessary, to secure the full consent of all the congregations under their superintendence; and if such changes were found not inconsistent with the proper meaning and tenor of the said Articles, they might be consented to and adopted."

The letter which the Synod of Victoria appointed, on 7th January, 1858, to be sent to the Free Church Synod was despatched with all haste, but the Free Church Synod adjourned on the 7th January, and consequently the letter could not be taken into consideration till the next meeting came round in April.

The alterations required by the Synod of Victoria to be made in the basis were in the following clauses :—

In the third Article—

"And that with this and the like functions it is equally presumptuous and unwarrantable in the Magistrate to interfere, and faithless and sinful in the Church to permit or submit to such interference."

In the fourth Article—

"And in particular it shall be a fundamental rule of this Church that the election of ministers, ruling elders, and deacons belong to the members of each separate congregation in full communion, the judicatories of the Church superintending and regulating the same."

In the fifth Article—

"While holding itself at liberty to maintain communion and correspondence with all other faithful Presbyterian Churches throughout the world."

The letter at the same time recognised the binding obligation of

the engagement into which the Synod of Victoria had entered with the Free Church, yet they are most anxious, at the same time, to obviate the objections to the Union which are taken by many of their most influential and valued members. They hoped their communication would be received in a favourable spirit, and they appointed a Committee to co-operate with one which the Free Church were asked to appoint with a view to effect the desired alterations.

On 7th April, 1858, the Free Church Synod entered on the consideration of the letter. It was proposed by Rev. W. Henderson, and seconded by Rev. Mr. Moir—

"That a Committee be now appointed to confer with the Committee of the Synod of Victoria, with a view to have the present difficulty removed."

An amendment was proposed by Dr. Cairns, and seconded by Mr. Thomas Dickson, that the following resolutions be adopted by the Synod, and transmitted to the Committee of the Synod of Victoria :—

"First—That this Synod considers itself bound by solemn obligation, undertaken deliberately and prayerfully, in the sight of the whole Church, to abide by the engagement entered into with the Synod of Victoria, in November, 1855, to unite with that Synod on the basis of Union then unanimously adopted.

"Second.—That, in consequence of that covenant, the Articles of Union have been accepted by our several congregations, though not without much difficulty and many painful sacrifices; and the alterations now desired would be regarded by many as a breach of faith, and would lead inevitably to new and bitter trials.

"Third.—That copies of the said basis of Union were sent to the parent Church in Scotland, and, after considerable delay, an opinion has been obtained from the leading ministers of that Church approving of the same as warranting Union ; and the changes now sought would not only injure our relations with that Church, but would subject this Church to the reproach of trifling with serious matters, and provoking further division, instead of seeking to heal that which has already occurred.

"Fourth.—That while endeavouring to persuade the brethren separated from the Synod that there was no sufficient cause for their opposition, and that on the ground of the Articles to which both Synods were pledged, they should return to their former place ; any proposal to alter that basis would, if entertained, extinguish all hope of a reconciliation.

"Fifth.—That under any view of the case, and the interests involved in it, the present is a most unsuitable time for broaching a subject so exceedingly delicate and hazardous, seeing that a deputation from this Synod has been sent to Scotland for the very purpose of obviating difficulties, and inducing our friends there to take a large and generous view of this Colonial question, and that any alteration of the basis might frustrate the object of their mission.

"Sixth.—That the request for change is neither wise nor expedient in present circumstances. The Union would have been consummated long ago but for circumstances over which neither Synod had any control. The delay has been occasioned by the impossibility of procuring a Civil Statute recognising the United Church, and protecting the property of the several parties. No blame is attributable to this Synod for this unfortunate necessity ; and it does not seem unreasonable to expect that the Synod of Victoria should exercise forbearance until God in His providence had removed the impediment which had hitherto obstructed the common movement.

"Seventh.—That for the reasons foregoing, the Synod would entreat the Synod of Victoria to abide by the agreement come to in November, 1855, and to sympathise with this Synod in its sore trial, and to use all means competent to them to facilitate the completion of the Union with the least possible delay."

On taking the vote, it was found that nine voted for the motion, and five for the amendment. Accordingly a Committee was appointed, with Mr. M'Donald, Convener.

On behalf of the Committee, Mr. M'Donald, on 12th April, 1858, wrote the following to Mr. Hetherington :—

"The Rev. I. Hetherington.

"My Dear Sir,—At a recent meeting of the Free Synod of Victoria, a communication from you, dated Melbourne, 7th January, 1858, was submitted by the Moderator ; the said communication referring to certain modifications asked by the Synod of Victoria to be made in the Articles of Union, in deference to the opinion of many influential and valued members of the congregations of your Synod. The Free Synod appointed the following a Committee in this matter : —Messrs. Nish, Divorty, M'Donald, and Moir, ministers ; and Messrs. Ogilvy and Dickson, elders. I write this letter in the name of the said Committee.

"The Committee instruct me to assure you that our Synod regards Union to be a greater necessity than ever, and that it considers itself bound by the most solemn obligations to abide by its engagements with the Synod of Victoria, as well as to seek the consummation of that engagement by all lawful means. At the same time I have to state that, at a recent meeting of Synod, a strong unwillingness was expressed by many members to go back on the Articles of Union, mainly because it was felt that to do so would be again to introduce painful discussions into some of our congregations, and might be to cause painful separations. The Committee hope that, in these circumstances, the brethren in the Synod of Victoria who are moving for the proposed alterations will rest satisfied with the following explanation, an explanation which the Committee feel assured the Free Church will not hesitate to ratify at any time, viz. : —

"First.—That the Free Synod regard the Articles as abstract truths, and not as pointing at Scottish Churches. They contain truths which any orthodox Presbyterian Church might adopt for herself for a basis were she framing her Constitution for the first time according to the Word of God.

"Second.—That the language in which the Articles are couched is not held by our Synod as intended to refer specially to the present state of the Scottish Establishment. We rather regard it as language in which you and we can equally and heartily join, whatever our opinion of the present state of the Scottish Establishment may be, because it is language rendered venerable to us all by the Presbyterian association of centuries.

"Third.—That the Free Synod quite understand that ministers and probationers of sufficient education and good standing, prepared to sign the Standards, are to be admitted into the proposed 'Presbyterian Church of Victoria,' whatever denomination they may have belonged to previously, it being understood that after admission into the proposed united Church they are to be ministers of that Church only, and amenable to her jurisdiction alone.

"The Committee fain hope that this explanation will remove any objections to the Articles as they stand, and that the Union will be consummated on these Articles with the least possible delay.

"D. M'Donald, Convener of Committee."

On the 6th May, 1858, this letter came under the consideration of the Synod of Victoria. After deliberation, it was proposed by Rev. Mr. Clow, and seconded by Mr. Blair—

"That the letter from the Union Committee of the Free Church having been read, the Synod do instruct the Union Committee to represent to the Union Committee of the Free Church in reply, that, although they would have preferred the alterations in the Articles which had been submitted to the Free Church, not merely or chiefly because of the offensive application of which they are susceptible to any existing Church, but rather because they are regarded as endangering the harmony of the future Church ; yet,

owing to the sense which they entertain of the extreme desirableness of Union, they are willing to accept the explanations which have been given by the Committee of the Free Church, provided these are embodied in a separate Article of Union, or are appended to the present Articles."

It was moved, however, as an amendment, by Rev. Mr. Love, and seconded by Rev. Mr. Craig—

"That the subject of the letter from the Union Committee of the Free Church be postponed for consideration till next meeting of Synod; that absent members be written to meanwhile requiring their attendance at that meeting."

The motion was withdrawn, and the amendment was adopted.

At the next meeting of the Synod of Victoria, on 2nd June, Rev. I. Hetherington, Moderator and Convener of the Union Committee, reported—

"That he had not succeeded in obtaining from the Free Church a statement of the terms in which an explanatory clause, to meet the demands of the Synod, might be introduced into the basis of Union."

It was then moved by Rev. A. Love—

"That as there appears to be no hope of inducing the Free Church to grant the concessions sought by this Synod in reference to certain passages in the basis of Union, the Synod resolve to take no further steps in this matter at present, and that the Moderator be instructed to communicate to the Moderator of the Free Church accordingly."

This proposition was not seconded.

It was next moved by Rev. Mr. Gunn, seconded by Mr. Corrie, and adopted—

"That the Synod do approve of the conduct of the Committee, express their firm hope that Union shall be accomplished, and re-appoint the Committee with instructions to prosecute negotiations with that view with the Free Church."

On 1st December, Mr. Hetherington, as Convener of the Union Committee, reported—

"That the Committee had held no meetings since last meeting of Synod, but from private interviews with some of the members of the Union Committee of the Free Church and others of its members, he had the hope that the Union would soon be satisfactorily arranged, whereupon the Committee, with the addition of Mr. Clow, was re-appointed, and power given them to deal with the Union Committee of the Free Synod with a view to obtain such alteration of the basis of Union as would render it generally acceptable."

The Committee was instructed to report to next meeting of Synod, which was adjourned to meet on Tuesday, the 8th inst.

The Committee held an early meeting, and fell on the bold expedient of abandoning the old basis altogether, on which there was no likelihood of agreement, and substituting one in a new and simple form, which might secure the desired harmony. The next step was to propose to the Free Church Union Committee the consideration of the Articles recommended for adoption. The new basis was favourably regarded, and both Committees agreed to bring it without delay before their respective Synods for discussion and decision.

On the 8th December it was submitted to the Synod of Victoria, and was cordially adopted.

On the same day the new Articles were brought before the Free Church Synod. The Convener submitted, on behalf of the Union Committee, a report, from which it appeared that the Synod of Victoria had intimated that they found it difficult to secure the approval of their congregations in going forward to Union on the Articles as formerly agreed upon, and proposed that the following basis be adopted instead of them—

"We, the undersigned ministers and elders of the Synod of Victoria, the Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, and the United Presbyterian Synod of Australia, having resolved, after long and prayerful deliberation, to unite together in one Synod and one Church, do now, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and with solemn prayer for His guidance and blessing, unite in one Synod, to be called the 'Presbyterian Church of Victoria,' and resolve and determine that the following be the fundamental principles and Articles of the Union, and be subscribed by each of the members of the new Synod :—

I. "That the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Form of Presbyterian Church Government, the Directory for Public Worship, and the Second Book of Discipline be the Standards and Formularies of this Church.

II. "That, inasmuch as there is a difference of opinion in regard to the doctrines contained in these Standards relative to the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion, the office-bearers of this Church, in subscribing these Standards and Formularies, are not to be held as countenancing any persecuting or intolerant principles, or as professing any views inconsistent with the liberty of personal conscience or the right of private judgment.

III. "That this Synod asserts for itself a separate and independent character and position as a Church, possesses supreme jurisdiction over its subordinate judicatories and congregations and people, and will receive all ministers and preachers from other Presbyterian Churches applying for admission on an equal footing, who shall thereupon become subject to its authority alone.

Formula.—"I do hereby declare that I do sincerely approve and accept the Standards and Formularies enumerated in the foregoing Articles as the confession of my faith, with the declarations and provisions contained in the second Article; and I promise that, through the grace of God, I shall firmly and constantly adhere to the same, that I shall follow no divisive counsels, but, in my station, and to the utmost of my power, shall assert, maintain, and defend the Doctrines, Worship, Discipline, and Government of this Church as therein defined, renouncing all doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever contrary to or inconsistent with the same."

The above is the form which the basis finally assumed. Under deliberation at several meetings of Synods and Conferences, various verbal alterations were proposed and adopted. And, to make it complete, the prefix and the formula were attached to the beginning and the end of the Articles.

The Free Church Synod evidently felt the awkwardness of dispensing with the second Article of the old basis. They had declared it to be essential to "retain it in its integrity," because it "asserts the obligation of the Civil Magistrate to countenance and cherish the truth of God," and because it is "a necessary part of Divine truth." For these reasons they closed the door of negotiation for Union with the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria in 1855. Other points in the old Articles which were obnoxious to the Synod of Victoria, and to which the Free Church were strongly attached, they

were now asked to surrender. The Free Synod, however, had passed through an ordeal of trouble, and had become more ready to consider the objections of the other contracting parties. Moreover, the Union question had reached a crisis. And if there was not some yielding now to secure harmony, Union might be indefinitely postponed. Accordingly, the following deliverance was adopted, the Free Church agreeing to go forward with the Union on the new basis :—

"After long and serious deliberation it was agreed that, as it was formerly unanimously determined, with the full concurrence and consent of the congregations under the superintendence of this Synod, that Union with the Synod of Victoria should be carried into effect on the basis of the Articles already agreed to, each minister be and hereby is instructed to bring the proposed change on the basis before a meeting of his congregation at as early a period as possible, and point out to the people the great desirableness and importance of the different sections of the Presbyterian Church being united in this Colony, and the full security this Church has for all its principles, under the blessing of God, being conserved and maintained on the basis of the old and venerated Standards of all the Scottish Churches ; and that a special meeting of Synod be held to come to a final decision on the matter."

The next meeting was fixed for the first Tuesday of February, 1859. However, a *pro re nata* meeting was held on 18th January. The object of this early meeting was to consider the Bill for legalising the Union and securing the property belonging to the congregations which they should carry with them into the united Body. The Synod approved of the Bill and instructed their members on the Joint-Committee to use all diligence to have it passed through both Houses of the Legislature. In regard to any congregation that might decline to enter into the union, provision was made in the Bill to meet such a case.

At the regular meeting, on 1st February, it was ascertained that all the congregations in the Body had been consulted as to their willingness to enter into the Union on the new basis. And the result was they unanimously agreed and were desirous that it should at once be consummated. There was one exception. The congregation of St. Andrew's, Carlton, under the pastorate of the Moderator, Rev. W. Fraser, was not unanimous. A majority in the congregation not only dissented, but was violently opposed. There were many Highlanders among the people, and they were distinguished by a highly conservative spirit.

It was moved by Dr. Cairns, seconded by Mr. D. M'Donald, and unanimously agreed to—

"That the reports having been given in from all the congregations within the bounds of this Synod in favour of Union, with the exception of St. Andrew's Church, Melbourne, which is divided in opinion, the said Union be approved, and that every means be used to have it consummated with as little delay as possible."

They further agreed to meet, in Conference with brethren of the other Synods contemplating Union, in the Scots Church the following afternoon, when the above resolution would be communicated.

On the following day, 2nd February, the relations to the separated brethren—the Free Church ministers—were considered. Correspon-

dence had been maintained between them, with a view to healing the breach that had occurred. The mediation and influence of the parent Church had been also employed for that end. But it appeared that all means had failed. The Synod were now constrained to "forego all hope of the breach being healed for the present, and to regard further correspondence on the subject as of no avail."

On the 9th December, 1858, "The Synod of Victoria appointed the Clerk to transmit to all their members a copy of the basis of Union adopted at this meeting, with instructions to bring it before their congregations at as early a date as possible, with a view of securing their concurrence."

On 2nd February, 1859, it was reported to the Synod that their congregations approved and accepted the new basis of Union.

At an evening meeting, on the same day, it was reported by the Moderator (Rev. G. M. Reed) that, at a meeting of Conference held in the afternoon, it had been resolved—

"That the Union of the Churches should take place on the first Thursday of April."

The Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria met on 5th April to dispose finally of the question as to entering the general Union. As a Synod, no meeting for Conference with the other Presbyterian sections on the subject of Union had been held for several years. They had no liberty to do so. While standing aloof Synodically, as they were obliged to do by the action of the Free Church Synod, yet the ministers and congregations were individually subjected to influences which drew some of them towards a line of action opposed to the constitutional character of the Denomination. At the same time this Synod, having been the first to broach the subject of Union in the Colony, had always lifted up their voice against existing divisions and contemplated a general incorporation of Presbyterians being effected sooner or later, in spite of discouragements, as a matter of certainty. It was felt, therefore, expedient, as there existed a general outcry by the public in favour of Union, so far as it could be effected, to allow freedom of action as far as possible to pastors and people in the Body as to the course they should take. However irregular and unconstitutional that course might be, there was no disposition to go to extremes, either ecclesiastically or legally, to embarrass brethren who might not be disposed to follow a strictly constitutional line. The complete Union of all sections and fragments being only a question of time, there would be no pains or penalties, no suits at law, or attempts to retain property which might be wrested from its proper and legal connection.

Hence it was that arrangements were made outside the Synod, without scruple, for ministers and Churches who were favourably disposed, to consider the Bill that had passed the Legislature to legalise the Union, and to decide for themselves whether it was a duty or not to unite with the general Body. And a meeting of Synod was called to be held at a convenient time for deciding or otherwise

the consummation of the Union. Having held the meeting on 5th April, and having transacted preliminary business, the Rev. D. H Ballantyne being elected Moderator, the Synod adjourned till next day. The absorbing business was the Union. Overtures and petitions on the subject, reports from congregations, and the legalising Bill all fell to be considered. A majority of congregations declared in favour of the Union. At this stage, however, it was abundantly evident, that the question was now too late for discussion. There was no disposition to weigh arguments on the part of a majority of members, no patience with deliberation, no inclination to look through constitutional spectacles. They had come for Union, not for debate. Union was the watchword, not consistency with denominational principles and character. And why all the hot haste? No interest would have suffered by waiting till the Legislature cleared the way by the total abolition of State-support to any Church, whether teacher of truth or of error. A strong agitation was being carried on in the community for repealing the 53rd clause in the new Constitution Act, and when the repeal was effected, the way would be clear for the United Presbyterians entering honourably and consistently into the Union. It was confidently expected that this triumph would within a short period be achieved. Then they would not perpetrate the anomaly of voluntaries entering into Union with a State-aid receiving Body. Such was the constitutional and conservative view of the situation.

At the afternoon meeting of the 6th April, the Rev. Alexander M'Nicol submitted the following motion, which was seconded by Rev. H. S. Seaborne :—

"That as this Synod has again and again declared in favour of a general Presbyterian Union, and as the proposed basis is substantially what was suggested by ourselves in 1855 ; and finding that a large majority of our congregations are of opinion that the time has arrived for its consummation, we now resolve to unite with the other Synods and form the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and proceed to wind up the business of the Synod, it being distinctly understood that in the United Church our ministers will continue, as heretofore, to be supported by the free-will offerings of the people, and that we will be at liberty individually to raise our voice against all State-endowments of religion, as we have formerly done both at Home and in this Colony."

The following resolutions were then submitted, as amendments, by the Rev. A. M. Ramsay, and seconded by Thomas Baird, Esq. :—

"First.—That this Synod is deeply impressed with the desirableness of a general Presbyterian Union in this Colony, based on common and scriptural grounds, and effected in a regular and constitutional manner.

"Second.—That this Synod at its formation in 1850 repudiated all connection with the State, and all State-endowments of religion, whatever shape they might assume, and that this fundamental principle has hitherto been maintained inviolate by the various congregations connected with the Synod, no aid whatever from the State, either in the shape of money or land, ever having been accepted by them.

"Third.—That the reception of State-aid on the part of other sections of the Presbyterian Church constitutes the grand difficulty in the way of a general incorporated Union, and that without some guarantee on the part of those sections that the reception of State-aid should cease and determine in the general Presbyterian Body now contemplated within a definite period, this

Synod cannot enter honourably or consistently into such a Union, but must continue to occupy a position in which it can clearly and effectively testify against the evil of State-endowments.

"Fourth.—That a resolution stands on the records of the Legislature of the Colony that it is expedient that all State-aid to religion should cease in the present year, and as subequently to the passing of that resolution a Bill for its entire abolition in 1860 passed the House of Assembly, and was lost in the Legislative Council only by a majority of one ; that not later than the close of 1860 should be the period when all the reception of State-aid should cease within the Churches of the proposed Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, and that in the meantime the aid be confined to those at present in the receipt of it, and that no new congregation formed under the superintendence of the Synod be sanctioned in any application for such aid.

"Fifth.—That this Synod experiences a difficulty in entertaining the proposal of entering into an incorporated Union which is admitting certain parties recently in connection with this Synod, with whom no arrangements have been made as to re-union.

"Sixth.—That a deputation from this Synod be appointed to meet with the Synod, negotiating on the subject of Union, and to lay these resolutions before them before coming to any final decision on the subject.

Before proceeding to the vote, it was proposed that the Synod resolve itself into a Committee for the more free consideration of the subject of Union, so that members might be enabled to vote with intelligence, and not as mere delegates to do simply as they were bid. The motion, however, on being put to the vote was negatived.

Various members expressed their minds on the question. On the conservative side it was pointed out that the motion being unconstitutional it was incompetent for the Moderator to put the motion from the chair, and a protest was taken to that effect. The motion and amendment, however, were put, and the former declared to be carried by a majority of eight to seven ; one of the ministers voting was without a charge, and one of the elders voting had no proper standing. The minority protested against the decision as unconstitutional and invalid, and therefore as devoid of effect on the identity, the rights and privileges, and the future operations of the Synod.

The Synod of Victoria met on 6th April, agreed on proposing some mere verbal alterations in the basis, and resolved on attending a general Conference of Presbyterians to be held in the evening, in order to make final arrangements for the consummation of the Union the following day. On the 7th April this Synod held its last meeting in the forenoon, and agreed to record the following final declaration :—

"The negotiations for the Union of various Synods of the Presbyterian Church in Victoria having now been brought to a successful conclusion, having been determined on a basis in which the distinctive principles, hitherto maintained by this Synod, are recognized and secured, this Synod desire to record, and do hereby record, their lively satisfaction at the result, and their profound gratitude to the Great Head of the Church, by whom they have been conducted to it, and resolve, in accordance with the arrangements now described, to meet this day as a constituted Synod with the other Synods—viz., the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, and the United Presbyterian Synod of Australia—for the purpose of the formal consummation of the Union."

The Free Church Synod of Victoria met on 5th April. The business on this and the following day was of a winding up character. The Synod adopted an arrangement proposed by which a schedule was prepared of twelve Church and school properties, which were surrendered to the dissentient Free Church minority. Reports respecting various funds were submitted and finally disposed of. On 7th April, the last Synod meeting was held in the forenoon. Arrangements were related respecting the time, place, and mode of effecting the long-expected Union. It was agreed to put on record the final statement here following :—

"Whereupon it was unanimously resolved that this Synod record their deep sense of thankfulness to the Great Head of the Church that the difficulties and hindrances that so long impeded the much-desired Union of the different sections of the Presbyterian Church in the Colony were now removed, and that the way was clear for the Union being carried into effect, and appoint one of the brethren to express their gratitude in prayer at the close of the present sederunt ; and being still fully convinced of the importance and necessity of this Union to the best interests of the Presbyterian people of this land, and that the principles for which this Church has always contended are fully conserved in the Articles of Union, this Synod resolves and determines to go into the said Union, according to the arrangements made by the Joint-Committee appointed for the purpose ; and the ministers and elders constituting this Synod, according to the list appended to this minute, connected with the congregations set over against their respective names and possessed of the properties mentioned, are hereby appointed and enjoined to repair as a constituted Synod to the Scots Church, Collins-street, and unite with the Synod of Victoria, the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, and the United Presbyterian Synod of Australia in forming one Synod, to be the Supreme Court of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria."

The United Presbyterian Synod met 7th April, according to adjournment, in the Collins-street United Presbyterian Church, at 10 o'clock a.m. There were present—Rev. Messrs. Ramsay, Hamilton, and Henderson, and Messrs. William Dall and Thomas Baird, elders. The Synod associated, as at the preceding meeting, Rev. R. T. Walker, recently arrived, minister-elect of the United Presbyterian Church, Ballaarat, and Mr. James Taylor, United Presbyterian elder from Glasgow.

"In pursuance of the protest taken the night before against the deed of a majority agreeing to enter into the present projected Presbyterian Union, by which a distinctive and fundamental principle of this Synod was compromised—on which unconstitutional deed action had forthwith been taken by said majority, inasmuch as, at a Conference of various Synods held the previous night in the Scots Church negotiating for Union, they did publicly give in their adhesion to the said General Presbyterian Union, and agreed to take part in the public consummation of the same this day—the members

of the Synod now present, holding themselves to be constitutionally and legally the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, and the brethren now attached to the General Presbyterian Union having by their own deed severed themselves from all connection with this Synod, proceeded to call on the Rev. R. Hamilton, the latest in order of previous Moderators, to occupy the chair and to lead their devotions, which was done accordingly."

During the conduct of devotional exercises by the Moderator, the Rev. Messrs. Ballantyne, M'Nicol, and Seaborne, with Messrs. Robertson, Hardie, Davidson, and Spedding (elders), appeared in the Church, claiming to be the Synod, when they were informed that they were held, by the deed of the preceding night, to have denuded themselves of all connection with the Synod, and that they could not meet for any business there in pursuing the course they had taken. The brethren then all withdrew.

Shortly after, Rev. Messrs. Ballantyne and M'Nicol returned, and demanded the possession of the minutes and records of the Court. The demand was refused. They then demanded an extract of the minutes of the proceedings of the evening before. This was granted.

The Synod, in closing the business of this meeting, agreed to place on record—

"That the motion, resolving to enter into an incorporated Union with two large sections of Presbyterians in the receipt of State-aid, was a violation of the fundamental Article of this Synod, which repudiates all connection with the State, and all State-endowments, whatever shape they may assume, and therefore was one which the Moderator ought not to have entertained.

"That any action taken thereon by the majority carrying the said motion was, in consequence, irregular, unconstitutional, and invalid.

"That the Conference held last night in the Scots Church on the part of said majority, with other Presbyterian Synods, was held without any decision, arrangement, or authority to that effect, and this Synod does not hold itself in any way committed to the course then pursued by these brethren.

"That the congregational returns read at the opening of the discussion, reporting favourably as to a General Presbyterian Union, had reference exclusively to the basis of Union, concerning which little or no difficulty was experienced in any quarter; that the reports had been made by the several congregations previous to the passing of the recent Act of the Legislature on Presbyterian Union; and that the Bill had not been under the consideration of any of the congregations, except those of Collins-street (Melbourne) and Geelong, which had both reported against it.

"That the original basis officially sent by the Rev. I. Hetherington, of the Scots Church, to the Melbourne Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church, and by them forwarded to the several congregations under their care, and on which said reports of congregations were based, did not contemplate the admission into the General Presbyterian Body of the 'United Presbyterian Synod of Australia,' consisting of the Rev. Messrs. James and John Ballantyne, John Cooper, and William Jarrett. The original basis runs thus—'We, the undersigned members and elders of the Synod of Victoria, the Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, and the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, having resolved, after long and prayerful deliberation, to unite together,' &c.; &c.; this Synod therefore considers that their congregations have not been fairly dealt with in asking them to report on one basis, and inserting another in the legislative enactment.

"That the vote resolving on immediate adhesion to the projected Union precluded any effort by Synodical Conference, or negotiation, to obtain a

guarantee from the Scots Church and Free Church sections as to the period when the reception of State-aid should cease within the united Body, or any arrangement with parties designating themselves the United Presbyterian Synod of Australia, so as to render the Union not one in name merely, but one that should be substantial and genuine, scriptural, satisfactory, and permanent.

"That in 1855, when this Synod entertained the proposal of entering into Union with the other Presbyterian bodies in the Colony, the relations and circumstances of parties were very different from what they are at the present time. The United Presbyterians then formed one entire body. The Free Church brethren were not then in the receipt of State-aid. They had testified against the Colonial system of indiscriminate endowments in the most solemn manner, and were joining in the general agitation for the abolition of the system by legislative enactment. Since the commencement of 1856, the great majority of the ministers of the Free Church have been, and they still are, in the receipt of State-aid, and that notwithstanding the Synod's own solemn protestations of the sinful character and injurious tendencies of the system. The Synod of Victoria, though in the receipt of State-aid, was comparatively a small Body. The United Body at that time would have been by a great majority a Body of practical voluntaries, whereas the Body now formed is by a vast majority a State-aid receiving denomination.

"Moreover, in 1855, the Synodical negotiations had extended only to the theoretical difficulty of the question of the Civil Magistrate's province in matters of religion. The practical difficulty of the reception of State-aid remained still to be grappled with by the different Synods before the Union could be consummated.

"Though the subject of Presbyterian Union has long occupied the attention of this Synod, yet the present movement has been of very recent date, and in circumstances very disadvantageous towards a fair representation of this Synod. It has been carried on while several of the Churches were destitute of fixed pastors, and while the senior minister of the denomination, who was Synod Clerk, was absent on a mission to Scotland. The movement has not been the grave, deliberate, and spontaneous action of the different Synods moving on towards each other after enlightened conviction that the cause which kept them separate had ceased to operate, and in the exercise of hearty and unrestrained sympathy, but the movement of a few individuals acting on the Churches in an irregular and inconsiderate and precipitate manner little calculated to effect a unanimous or satisfactory Union.

"The following additional facts mark, in a decisive manner, the extreme precipitancy with which recent proceedings had been conducted :—

"The name of the United Presbyterian Synod was inserted in the Bill without its sanction or authority ; the Bill was even passed before the Synod met to consider it.

"The name of the Free Presbyterian Synod was also inserted before that Body met to give it its express sanction.

"The minority of the Free Church, who also claim to be the Free Presbyterian Synod of the Colony, finding their name included in the Bill, and fearing injurious consequences from the operation of the Act, petitioned the Legislature against it ; and, while the Bill was in Committee, got all their Church property exempted from its operations by a schedule attached to the Act.

"The Bill was introduced into the Legislature on the 13th January, and passed both Houses on 24th February. It was anticipatory in its character, and could not take effect till the Union of the four Synods was consummated.

"Though the Bill was hurried through the Legislature, and at the close of the session, it was expected that a considerable interval would elapse before the Ecclesiastical Union would be consummated, to admit of every difficulty in the way being fairly met and disposed of ; but from the passing of the Act to the consummation of the Union six weeks were allowed to elapse. While this Synod stood convened, and had yet to meet and deliberate on the Bill, arrangements were being made for the public inauguration of the Union. The following advertisement appeared in the public newspapers on the morning that this Synod met for the first time to discuss a recent Act of the Legisla-

ture on Presbyterian Union, which affects the civil rights as well as the ecclesiastical relations of all congregations entering into the Union :—

"'Meeting.—Presbyterian Union.—A public meeting, in celebration of the Union of the Presbyterian Churches in Victoria, will be held in the Exhibition Building on Thursday, the 7th instant, at 7 o'clock p.m. The Rev. J. Clow in the chair.'

"The brethren who last night voted in the majority came up to Synod, not as members of a free and independent deliberative assembly, but rather as delegates to vote as instructed—avowedly, indeed, not to consider but to consummate the Union.

"While a legislative enactment may have been necessary in the case of the Synod of Victoria, existing as she did by an Act of the Colonial Legislature, to enable her freely to enter into a general Presbyterian Union, no action of the Legislature was requisite in the case of this Synod. The natural order would have been first to form the ecclesiastical Union, and then if any legislative measure was necessary for the proper definition of any trust, or the protection of property, the same could have been obtained.

"Without wishing to interfere with the free action of any of the congregations desiring to enter into this Union, so far as the just administration of their respective trusts admit them, this Synod hereby holds and declares herself to be 'The United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria,' as instituted in 1850, and identified in Doctrine, Worship, and Government with the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland, and all records, books, hereditaments, and other property belonging to the said Synod, remain as heretofore in its rightful possession.

"To the unconstitutional and irregular manner in which the Union negotiations have recently been carried on, and the precipitate action of the Legislature on the subject, this Synod cannot but trace, as she deplores the unhappy result, that the divisions of Presbyterianism are left much as they were. True, two large sections of the Presbyterians, in the receipt of State-aid, are now incorporated together, with a few voluntary ministers, but there still remain the three grand divisions in somewhat of their distinctive integrity, viz.—Established, Free, and United Presbyterian. A little further time, with more openness and patient deliberation, might have effected a Union in which the last vestige of Presbyterian division would have disappeared from the future history of this Colony. It is, however, fondly hoped that all will be overruled for good in the adorable Providence of the Great Head of the Church. Should the recipients of State-aid not see it to be their duty to clear the platform for their United Presbyterian brethren, by the renunciation of what they know to offend, the hope is confidently entertained that the Legislature will soon effect this for them, and then the practical, as well as the theoretical, difficulty being disposed of, they will soon meet and co-operate in the service of their common Redeemer in the closest ecclesiastical bonds."

CHAPTER XI.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA. —UNION CELEBRATIONS, APRIL, 1859.

The great day of consummation has at length arrived. The struggles sustained in preparing for Union are over, and the time has come for the celebration of the object accomplished. The hard battles have been fought and the victory must needs be proclaimed amid hearty rejoicings. It is true there is cause for sorrow in the midst of the joy. What battle was ever fought and won without loss, pain, and disaster in some measure? The triumphs of peace after war can never be celebrated without more or less of the saddening reflection that so many brave lives have perished. It seems to be an essential part of the economics of this world that joy should be tempered by a mixture of sorrow. Hence, the Union, celebrated with warm thanksgivings and bright hopes, stood closely associated with disruptions, heartburnings, and painful separations. Nevertheless, the predominating feeling on such an occasion on the part of many who have prayed and toiled for the accomplishment of an object of no ordinary importance and difficulty must be one of high exultation. The mode adopted for the manifestation of joyful feeling in the circumstances behoved to be appropriate. It was arranged that the four Synods should meet together in the Scots Church, Collins-street, the oldest of any Presbyterian Church in the Colony, at noon of the 7th April, for the public consummation of the Union. Immediately after the formal accomplishment of the act of incorporation, it was agreed that the Communion of the Lord's Supper should be observed. The following are the names of the ministers who agreed to enter into Union :—

Synod of Victoria.

Rev. James Clow, without a charge.
* ,, Andrew Love, Geelong.
,, Irving Hetherington, Collins-street, Melbourne.
,, Peter Gunn, Campbellfield.
,, John Gow, Woady Yallock.
,, David Boyd, Heidelberg.
,, Thomas Craig, Essendon.
,, Hugh Blair, Colac and Ondit.
,, Alexander Duff, Cranbourne and Dandenong.
,, James Megaw, S. Melbourne (Windsor).
,, George M'Culloch Reed, North Melbourne.
Rev. Samuel Kelly, Alberton.
,, Wm. J. Taggart, Skipton and Carngham.
,, Robert Hogg, Horsham.
* ,, A. Grahame, Kalkallo.
* ,, Samuel Kelso, Portland.
* ,, J. Parker, Belfast.
* ,, James Low, Castlemaine.
* ,, Samuel Corrie, Kilnoorat.
,, William Hamilton, Mortlake.

Elders.

Henry Budge.
Donald Kennedy.
John Brown.

* Not present at the celebration.

FREE CHURCH SYNOD OF VICTORIA.

Rev. William Fraser, St. Andrew's, Carlton.
,, Adam Cairns, East Melbourne.
,, John Tait, Geelong.
,, Thomas Hastie, Buninyong.
,, John Storie, Castlemaine.
,, Geo. Mackie, Lake Learmonth.
,, J. H. M'Lachlan, Wickliffe, Hopkins.
,, Charles Moir, St. Kilda.
,, Archibald Simpson, The Leigh.
,, John S. Moir, Brighton.
,, Donald M'Donald, Emerald Hill
,, George Divorty, Prahran.
,, James Nish, Sandhurst.
,, Evan M'Donald, Kyneton.
,, Alexander Proudfoot, Batesford.
,, John Clark, Williamstown.
,, Robert Sutherland, Allansford
,, Francis R. M. Wilson, Camperdown.
,, Wm. M'Intosh, Ararat.
* ,, Dugald M'Calman, Narracoorte.
* ,, Alexander Adam, Burnbank.
* ,, J. Don, Mount Gambier.
* ,, John Grant, Maldon.
* ,, William Henderson, Ballaarat.
* ,, Angus M'Donald, Hamilton.
* ,, J. H. M'Millan, Beechworth.
* ,, William Login, Sale.

Elders.

John S. Ogilvy.
Robert Rattray.
Charles Fergusson.
Neil M'Callum.
William Hurst.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD OF VICTORIA.

Rev. Alex. M'Nicol, Bacchus Marsh.
,, David Hunter Ballantyne, Albury, N.S.W.
,, John Meek, Gisborne.
,, Hugh S. Seaborne, without a charge.

Elders.

William Robertson.
Alexander Hardie.
James Davidson.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD OF AUSTRALIA.

Rev. James Ballantyne, Lonsdale-street Melbourne.
,, John Ballantyne, Emerald Hill.
,, William Jarrett, without a charge.
* ,, John Cooper, without a charge.

Elders.

James Bennie.
John Watson.

* Not present at the celebration.

The interesting and solemn services of this memorable day began in the Scots Church at noon. Forty ministers out of fifty-five, and seventeen elders, belonging to the different Denominations, met together publicly to ratify the terms of the Union. The Church was filled with a large and respectable body of deeply interested worshippers and witnesses. The whole of the circumstances were, in the experience of the Colony, unexampled. Unions had been frequently celebrated between religious bodies in the old country, but these had embraced only two sects out of a number. No Union exactly such as this Victorian one had been known among Christian Denominations. It comprehended the peculiar principles and distinctive characteristics of the three great Presbyterian Bodies in Scotland. It is true the numbers forming the United Church of the Colony were comparatively small. But the country was young, and the Presbyterian Church was in her childhood. She had succeeded in laying the foundations of a unity, which should grow with her growth and expand with her years, deepening and broadening itself in all the elements of strength, stability, and success. The Union, too, is to be regarded as nearly all-embracing. There are a few left outside, and they are not to be condemned in so far as they have stood aloof on views of conscience. There is really nothing substantially serious in the line which divides the many from the few. If there is anything like substance, it is not

so very formidable, and as surely as the beams of the rising sun absorb the rays of the starlight, so surely shall the flickering of Presbyterianism outside the Union become ere long lost in the bright sunshine of the large luminary—the general body. The proceedings were, therefore, characterised by the deepest solemnity and by sublime elevation.

The contracting parties entered the Church at the time arranged, and took their seats in front of the pulpit. The eldest minister, Rev. W. Fraser, announced the 102nd Psalm, 2nd version, 16th verse, as the portion to be sung. The 4th chap. of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians was read, and prayer was offered.

Rev. Mr. Tait, Clerk of the Free Church Synod, read the minute of their last meeting, agreeing to unite.

Rev. John Ballantyne, Clerk of the United Presbyterian Synod of Australia, read the minute containing their final concurrence in the Union.

Rev. Mr. Seaborne, Clerk of the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, read the minute of their decision to the same effect.

Rev. James Megaw, Clerk of the Synod of Victoria, read their minute of agreement to the Union.

The Rev. John Storie* proposed the Rev. James Clow, the eldest minister of the Church, and its earliest pioneer, to be the first Moderator of the United Church.

The Rev. James Nish seconded the motion, which was cordially agreed to.

Mr. Clow having taken the Moderator's chair, invited the Assembly to join with him in their first duty on the occasion—that of prayer. The devotional feelings of the great congregation were powerfully drawn forth in the exercise, in thanksgiving, adoring praise, confession, and earnest supplication for blessing on the Union. He then delivered a judicious, appropriate, and earnest address. At the close of his oration, he requested the ministers and elders of the covenanting body to stand up while he read the basis of Union, and asked their individual and united assent to all its terms, declarations, and pledges. The whole of the members of the uniting Body heard the Articles of Union in a standing posture.

This ceremony having been completed, the Union covenant was ratified. The next part of the programme was the observance of the Lord's Supper. The Rev. Dr. Cairns invited all the members of the covenanting Bodies to take their seats at the Communion table. A portion of the 35th Paraphrase was sung. Dr. Cairns then read from 1st Corinthians xi. 21, and, after our Lord's example, he offered

* The following notice was omitted in its proper place at page 92 :—
Rev. John Storie appeared before the Presbytery of Castlemaine on 24th December, 1857. It appeared from his credentials that he had been an ordained minister of the Free Church of Scotland, South Shields, in connection with the Presbytery of Newcastle-on-Tyne. A call in his favour from Free Church Presbyterians in Castlemaine was laid on the table of Presbytery, 4th May, 1858, and he was inducted into the charge of a new congregation in Templeton-street on the 1st June following. On the 26th September, 1860, he accepted a call from St. Andrew's Church, Hobart Town.

thanksgiving and prayer, invoking the Divine blessing on all who had met to consecrate themselves in new and solemn circumstances to the service of their Lord and Saviour.

Dr. Cairns then addressed the communicants in terms appropriate to the occasion. At the close of the address the 64th Paraphrase was announced, and a portion was sung. The emblems of the Saviour's broken body and shed blood were then distributed among the communicants, through the instrumentality of the officiating elders. The solemn engagements were closed by prayer and the benediction.

The members of the United Body then, in token of their personal and united adoption of the basis, appended their names to the document. The number of ministers who signed was forty, there being fifteen absent, while seventeen elders put down their names. Ministers' names were all put down in the order of their ordination.

An interesting incident occurred in the admission to the united Body of the Rev. William Hamilton, of Mortlake. Mr. Hamilton was a member of the old Synod of Australia, New South Wales. At the time of the disruption of that body, Mr. Hamilton advocated a neutral position, and when he failed in his object he resigned his charge and came to Victoria. And now finding the basis of the United Church to be independent and liberal, such as he formerly endeavoured but failed to secure in the old Synod of Australia, he cordially joined the Union, into which he was heartily and unanimously admitted.

On the evening of the same day, a public *soirée* was held in the old Exhibition Building, West Melbourne, the largest available erection in the city. The Rev. James Clow, the first Moderator of the United Body, presided. The spacious edifice was filled at all points. The platform was occupied by the members of the new Body. The back of the platform was occupied by the choir, about one hundred in number.

The proceedings of the evening were commenced by Rev. Mr. Hetherington, who read the 100th Psalm, which was sung by the immense congregation, the large choir leading with organ accompaniment. Mr. Hetherington then led the meeting in prayer, after which the 24th Psalm was sung.

The Rev. Mr. Clow addressed the meeting, declaring the occasion of their assembling together to be the happiest and most important that could be conceived, and affirming that nothing had occurred during his twenty-one years' residence in the Colony that had given him so much satisfaction as the Union which had been consummated that day.

The Rev. Dr. Cairns then addressed the meeting at considerable length on "The Divine warrant for Presbytery," proving from Scripture that it had its origin in the earliest days of the Christian Church.

Mr. Ogilvy gave a long address on the theme, that "The Presbyterian system, as founded on Scripture, has many and great advantages, being admirably adapted to preserve the spiritual liberties of

a Christian people, and to promote the cause of Christ among all classes and all nations."

Dr. Wilkie expressed his gratification at the celebration of Presbyterian Union, and hoped it would be rendered yet more complete, and it would then secure a glorious future for the Church of Christ.

Rev. W. Jarrett spoke on "The Union as it Affected the Prosperity of the Church itself."

The 23rd Psalm was then sung.

Rev. James Ballantyne gave an address on "The Influence of Union in the Church on the World Without."

Rev. Mr. M'Nicol addressed the meeting on "Personal Piety the True Basis of Christian Union."

The 122nd Psalm was sung in conclusion, the Moderator pronounced the benediction, and the meeting dispersed.

On the 8th April the United Body met in the Scots Church, Collins-street, according to adjournment. The Moderator commenced the proceedings by prayer.

Rev. John Tait, Geelong, was appointed Clerk.

The first business was a discussion on the name to be assumed by the Supreme Court of the United Church. It was carried by a considerable majority that the name should be—"The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria," dispensing with provincial Synods for the present, and having the Presbytery as the next subordinate governing body.

The Assembly then proceeded to the consideration of the Constitution of Presbyteries. The result was the formation of the following six Presbyteries:—Melbourne, Geelong, Castlemaine, Ballaarat, Kilnoorat, and Portland.

The Melbourne Presbytery comprehended Messrs. Clow, Cairns (D.D.), Divorty, Hetherington, M'Donald, Fraser, Jas. Ballantyne, John Ballantyne, C. Moir, J. S. Moir, Reed, Gunn, Duff, M.A., Megaw, Clark, Kelly, Jarrett, Meek, M'Nicol, Craig, Boyd, M'Millan, B.A., Login, Grahame, D. Ballantyne, and M'Lachlan, ministers.

The Geelong Presbytery embraced Messrs. Love, Tait, Cooper, Simpson, Proudfoot, and Blair, ministers.

The Castlemaine Presbytery consisted of Messrs. Low, Storie, Nish, Grant, and M'Donald, ministers.

The Ballaarat Presbytery had Messrs. Henderson, Hastie, Hogg, B.A., M.A., Taggart, M'Intosh, Adam, M.A., Mackie, and Gow, ministers.

The Kilnoorat Presbytery were Messrs. Corrie, Hamilton, and Wilson, ministers.

The Portland Presbytery consisted of Messrs. Don, Sutherland, Kelso, Parker, M'Calman, ministers, and the vacant congregations of Warrnambool and Woodford.

Another matter specially requiring adjustment at the commencement of proceedings was that bearing on the management of State-aid grants. It was an understanding on the part of the voluntary

brethren that the question respecting the reception and distribution of the Government money should not come before the regular meetings of Assembly. Accordingly, it was agreed—"To appoint a Committee to receive and take charge of the portion of the grant made by Government, to which the Synod of Victoria and the Synod of the Free Church of Victoria were respectively entitled, in order to carry out the arrangements made by the former Synods to the end of the present year, and to report thereon to the next Assembly." The Rev. I. Hetherington was Convener.

A Committee was appointed on Sabbath-schools, another on Missions; a third, on the Widows' Fund; a fourth, on Finance; a fifth, on the Scotch College; and a sixth was instructed to prepare rules and forms of procedure for the Sessions, Presbyteries, and General Assembly of the Church.

Then the first memorable Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria closed its sittings.

Book II.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA—1859-1864.

After the consummation of the Union, the fifty-five ministers, arranged in Presbyteries, had a great work before them. With no small earnestness they set themselves to consolidate and expand the Church. The burden devolved chiefly on them to provide for the spiritual wants of the country, rather than on the few who remained outside the Union. The general Body had the numbers, the resources, and the benefits of united counsel, all fitting them for successful enterprise. Almost all the newly-arrived ministers from the fatherland, of whatever denomination, might be confidently expected to swell the ranks of the large ecclesiastical corporation. The two small sections still separate existed only for testimony, truly, or otherwise, for conscience. No essential principle of Presbyterianism divided them, and it was a settled point that all Presbyterians in Victoria should sooner or later be absorbed in one Denomination. Meanwhile the various Presbyteries had their hands full in supplying religious ordinances to the various places where congregations were expected to be formed.

May, 1859.—The first minister who made his appearance after the Union to join the Assembly was Rev. John Steele. He came from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. He had been ordained on the 22nd November, 1858, by the Presbytery of Belfast. His testimonials were satisfactory, and he was received.

Rev. Robert Boag was the next accession. He had long been employed in teaching, both in Glasgow and in Sydney, N.S.W. Previous to the Union, he had applied for admission into the Synod of Victoria, but, before his application was decided upon, he was obliged to return on business to Sydney. His testimonials, however, had been found satisfactory. He had been an ordained minister in the Church of Scotland. He was at once received into connection with the ministry of the Church. He was never settled in Victoria.

The events of the month were not all of a cheerful and progressive character. The Rev. W. Fraser, in consequence of divisions in his congregation, a majority of the people being hostile to the Union, felt it his duty to demit the pastoral charge of St. Andrew's. The Presbytery of Melbourne expressed much sympathy with the minister, who suffered greatly on account of the adverse party having forcibly kept possession of the Church. The separation of

Mr. Fraser from his charge was found inevitable. This, however, was an exception to the cheering progress of the Church.

It was found that a place of worship was being erected by the Presbyterians of Kalkallo independently of Presbyterial arrangement. The people, however, would not for a time need pulpit supply beyond what Rev. P. Gunn, of Campbellfield, could give. This place is better known as Donnybrook.

Then at Kilmore a considerable body of people were anxious to be formed into a congregation, and to have a regular supply of ministerial service.

Arrangements were made to form a congregation at Heathcote, formerly known as the M'Ivor diggings. Proceedings were also initiated for the formation of a congregation at Rushworth. Besides all these, it was in view to establish a new cause at Pentland Hills. A new congregation was in contemplation to be formed in Collingwood. A United Presbyterian congregation already existed in that part of Collingwood which is now named Fitzroy. But the minister and congregation did not meanwhile enter the Union. Without interfering with this Church, it was judged expedient to originate another for the eastern part of the district, in a convenient locality. A site was at length obtained in Wellington-street, at a respectable distance from Napier-street.

June.—The Rev. A. J. Campbell arrived on 30th May. He was cordially welcomed into the fellowship of the Church. Mr. Campbell had occupied a prominent position in the Free Church in Melrose, South of Scotland. He was noted in his former sphere, and through a wide circle of influence, as an earnest, devoted, and successful worker in his Master's service. In the great evangelical movement which swept like a mighty wave over the north of Ireland, and a large portion of Scotland, he took a leading part. He was ordained in 1843, and, therefore, came to the Colony with a ripened ministerial experience. His arrival in Victoria was hailed as an accession to the ministry of no ordinary importance. The difficulty was to secure for him a position of central influence, where his eminent talents and acquirements would have sufficient scope. Melbourne was fully occupied, and the next post of consequence that was available seemed to be Geelong. Very soon after he reached these shores he was invited to take the co-pastorate of the Scots Church, Geelong. Rev. A. Love had been for some time contemplating a partial retirement from ministerial work.

After a short period of successful labour as co-pastor, it was judged expedient that he should originate a new congregation, in another part of the town. In due time a large and handsome Church was erected, and a substantial manse adjoining, at the west end of the town. Here he formed a large, stable, and flourishing cause. At length, with advancing years and infirmities, he obtained a colleague and successor in 1883.

Mr. Campbell has excelled in the Church Court as a fluent speaker, as sharp, clear, and incisive in debate, forcible in delivery,

and, indeed, possessed of all the qualities essential to effective pulpit or platform address. He has the reputation of being the best ecclesistical lawyer in the Church. In all the important business that has ever come before the Assembly he has acted the part of an able counsellor and an authoritative guide. He published a very useful book as a help to Christian families in the bush, whereby, when far removed from the stated services of a minister, they could meet together on the Lord's day and edify one another. In token of high recognition of his many abilities, his distinguished and lengthened service, his rich culture, and his varied excellence, the College of Kingston, Ontario, in the United States of America, conferred on him, in 1887, the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

An event to be noted in the progress of the Church at this time was the resolution to open religious services at Schnapper Point.

September.—Rev. J. Steele (Scotland) was inducted into the charge at Heathcote on the 5th, Rev. A. M'Nicol into that of Rushworth on the 6th, and Rev. W. Fraser into that of Bulla on the 25th.

A movement began at Chiltern with a view to the formation of a congregation and securing the privileges of settled religious worship.

November.—An inquiry was agreed upon into the spiritual wants of Pentland Hills.

December.—Rev. Robert Henderson and Rev. James Treadwell, ordained ministers of the Free Church of Scotland, were received into the ranks of the ministry.

At this time an important meeting took place in the office of the Minister of Lands. The dissentient minority of the Free Church laid claim to a controlling power, according to their numbers, and a corresponding share in the properties of St. Andrew's Church, Carlton, the Scotch College, Chalmers Church, and the South Yarra Church. The claimants representing the outstanding minority were Rev. A. M'Vean and Mr. W. M. Bell. The defendants representing the Presbyterian Church were Rev. D. M'Donald and Rev. I. Hetherington. The Commissioner of Lands listened to the various arguments, and, within a few days, gave his decision in favour of the Presbyterian Church claims in all cases excepting St. Andrew's. The friends of the minority there were in immediate possession, but there was reason to believe that in a short time this would be secured also.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA,

1st November, 1859. Rev. Adam Cairns (D.D.), Moderator.

The following are the changes that occurred in the ministry from the Union to date :—

Induction	—Rev.	John Steele—Heathcote.
,,	,,	A. J. Campbell—co-pastorate St. Andrew's, Geelong.
,,	,,	John Anderson—Maryborough.
Translation	,,	Alexander M'Nicol—Rushworth.
,,	,,	William Fraser—Bulla.
Resignation	,,	James Low—Castlemaine.
,,	,,	James Parker—Belfast.
	,,	John Grant (loosed)—Maldon.

There were fifty-four ministers on the roll.

Twenty items of business were on the programme.

Rev. Adam Turnbull, M.D., of Campbelltown, Tasmania, was introduced. He addressed the Assembly.

A draft of rules and forms was brought forward, and discussed clause by clause. They were stamped with interim authority.

An overture on Sabbath Observance called forth a distinct and emphatic utterance in favour of Lord's Day sanctification, and in condemnation of Sabbath desecration.

Another overture on revivals in the mother country and in the United States elicited an expression of lively interest in the good work that had been carried on in these lands, and of an earnest desire that prayer and effort in the Colony might be attended with gracious results.

It was resolved to commemorate the Tercentenary of the Reformation in Scotland at their next meeting in the city of Melbourne.

The report of the Widows' Fund was submitted. Rev. D. M'Donald, Convener.

A Committee was appointed to consider and report as to the advisableness and practicability of setting up a Theological Institution.

A Committee was instructed to collect funds for bringing out ministers.

It was agreed that the Assembly should adjourn for an hour to allow the Convener of the State-aid Committee to make his report to the members interested. Before the adjournment it was also agreed to remit to the Committee three new applications.

Three of the voluntary ministers and an elder dissented from this intrusion of State-aid business into the Assembly. And still it was announced, when the Assembly resumed, that the Committee had agreed on a scheme of distribution.

Reports were submitted on the Scotch College, on Sabbath-schools, and on Education.

In regard to Education, the Assembly instructed their Committee to use all diligence to secure, in any system of education sanctioned by the Legislature, the three following principles:—

"1. That God be acknowledged by the school being opened and closed with prayer. 2. That the teachers be persons of sound religious character. 3. That the Word of God be read in the schools."

A Committee was appointed to consider and mature a plan of Home Missionary operations, and another to prepare a Model Trust Deed. The subject of Intemperance was also dealt with.

THE FOLLOWING WERE NOTICEABLE EVENTS OF THE YEAR—1860.

February.—Rev. A. Begg, a probationer of the Free Church of Scotland, recently arrived, was welcomed into the communion of the Church, and in the ordinary way was settled at Warrnambool and Woodford.

Rev. S. A. Hamilton, an ordained minister of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, applied for admission, and was received.

March.—Rev. E. B. Steel, a probationer of the Free Church of Scotland, a recent arrival, was admitted into fellowship.

Rev. James Caldwell was invited, in a petition signed by sixty-four persons, to labour for a time in Collingwood, with which he complied.

A memorial was sent from the United Presbyterian congregation, Sydney, to the Melbourne Presbytery, stating that the pulpit was vacant, and asking that the Rev. James Ballantyne might be sent to officiate for two months. He agreed to go for one month.

Rev. John Ballantyne obtained leave of absence to take a voyage home for his health.

May.—A call was brought out at Ararat, Presbytery of Ballaarat, in favour of Rev. James Megaw, of South Melbourne (Prahran).

Rev. S. Kelly resigned his charge at Tarraville and Port Albert.

A memorial was presented by the Presbyterians of Upper Plenty and Mersey, wishing to be formed into a congregation, and to have Rev. S. A. Hamilton settled among them.

June.—A call issued from East Collingwood (Wellington-street), in favour of Rev. James Caldwell, signed by 105 names. The stipend promised was £450. The call was accepted, and the induction took place on the 18th.

July.—Rev. S. A. Hamilton was inducted to the united charge of Janefield and Mayfield.

Rev. W. Jarrett, being without a pastoral charge, agreed, at the request of the people, to supply for three months at Prahran.

August.—Rev. S. Kelly was appointed to labour in Richmond district, with a view to the formation of a congregation.

September.—A movement was initiated in Lancefield, in order to obtain the services of a settled minister.

October.—Rev. James Adam, an ordained minister of the Free Church of Scotland, recently arrived, was admitted into connection by the Home Mission Committee.

Rev. James Scott, probationer from the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, a new arrival, was received under the jurisdiction of the Melbourne Presbytery.

A movement began at Oakleigh for securing the services of a Presbyterian minister on the afternoon of each Lord's Day, in a Union Chapel, which all Denominations had united in erecting.

At this date two places of worship were erected, at Springfield and Mayfield.

A call emanated from the Bacchus Marsh congregation, signed by sixty-seven names, and, at the same time, one from Pentland Hills, signed by fifty-three, in favour of Rev. James Scott. The ordination was effected the following month.

November.—The Presbyterians of Richmond were formed into a congregation. They called Rev. S. Kelly, but the call was not sustained.

December.—Rev. Hugh Darling applied to be taken into the

communion of the Church. He had been sent out by the United Presbyterian Board of Missions in 1857 to join the voluntary Presbyterian Body in Victoria. But he soon left for Sydney, and now, in the end of 1860, he appeared in Melbourne, and was admitted into the general Body by the Home Mission Committee.

Rev. John White, a probationer, formerly of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and who had been received, prior to the Union, by the Synod of Victoria, now applied for recognition by the Melbourne Presbytery of the United Church. The decision was postponed.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 1st May 1860. Rev. Adam Cairns (D.D.), Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	R. Henderson—Eaglehawk.
,,	,,	W. Smith—Miners' Rest.
,,	,,	D. H. M'Murtrie—Smeaton.
,,	,,	E. Blair—Wickliffe.
,,	,,	J. M'L. Abernethy—Tower Hill.
,,	,,	P. Simpson—Belfast.
,,	,,	A. Begg—Warrnambool and Woodford.
,,	,,	John Cooper—Rokewood.
Resignation	,,	W. Taggart—Skipton.
Death	,,	John Tait—Malop-street, Geelong.
,,	,,	W. M'Intosh—Ararat.

In consequence of the death of Rev. John Tait, Clerk of Assembly, Rev. I. Hetherington was appointed to the vacant office.

There were fifty-eight names of ministers on the roll.

There were twenty-three items of business.

A most solemn and impressive Act of this Assembly was carrying into effect a sentence of deposition.

It was agreed to petition the Legislative Assembly against certain clauses proposed in an amended Law of Divorce.

An application was made on behalf of Rev. W. A. Lind, asking that he be admitted to the ministry of this Church. Mr. Lind had been ordained as a missionary in connection with the London Missionary Society—he had laboured in the Mission at Tahiti till the French took forcible possession of the country—and he professed to have a thorough knowledge of her principles, and a cordial preference for her polity. High testimony was borne to his character as a Christian, and his qualifications as a minister.

It was agreed to receive Mr. Lind as a probationer for twelve months.

The congregation of Bacchus Marsh presented a memorial on behalf of Mr. Stoker, a Wesleyan preacher, praying that he be admitted as a Catechist under the jurisdiction of the Assembly. He had been officiating with much acceptance in their vacant charge, and the people were desirous of retaining his services as a Catechist, pending the arrival of a minister from Home. Mr. Stoker was received into employment as a Catechist for the next twelve months.

It was agreed to insert in the permanent record the brief minute below, expressive of respectful esteem for their departed brother, Rev. John Tait,* and sorrow for their common loss.

ASSEMBLY, 6TH NOVEMBER, 1860. REV. JAMES BALLANTYNE, MODERATOR.

During the half-year ending in November, 1860, there were seven inductions, five resignations, two translations of ministers, and one death.

Induction	—Rev.	J. Caldwell—East Collingwood.
,,	,,	S. A. Hamilton—Mayfield and Springfield.
,,	,,	J. M'Roberts—Barrabool Hills and Duneed.
,,	,,	A. Robb—Maldon.
,,	,,	E. B. Steel—Creswick.
,,	,,	J. Treadwell—Balranald.
,,	,,	H. S. Seaborne—Chiltern.
Resignation	,,	J. Parker, as a minister of the gospel.
,,	,,	S. Kelly—Tarraville and Port Albert.
,,	,,	J. Storie—Templeton-street Congregation, Castlemaine.
,,	,,	G. Mackie—Lake Learmouth.
,,	,,	R. Hogg—Horsham.
Translation	,,	J. Megaw—Ararat.
,,	,,	A. J. Campbell—West Geelong.
†Death	,,	John Ballantyne—Emerald Hill. At Edinburgh, on 4th October.

Items of business before the Assembly amounted to thirty-one.

This Assembly resolved on adding to the mission among the Chinese that among the Aborigines.

The number of ministers on the roll amounted to sixty.

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* MEMORIAL MINUTE OF REV. JOHN TAIT.

They found him skilful in the laws and customs of the Church, painstaking and accurate in conducting its business, and wise in counsel. Possessed of these excellencies, his influence was deeply felt in the negotiations for uniting the divided sections of the Presbyterian Church in this Colony. He was permitted to rejoice in the consummation of his labours and his prayers, to participate in the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and, as its first Clerk, to initiate its records.

Believing that his work on earth was finished, and that the Master he served had called him hence to receive the Christian Confessor's Crown, the brethren of this Assembly bow submissively before His sovereign will, and ask His grace to follow in his steps, and to carry on the work he was permitted with them to commence.

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† MEMORIAL MINUTE OF PRESBYTERY.

In recording the death of the Rev. John Ballantyne, the first that has occurred among the ministers of this Presbytery since the consummation of the Union, the brethren desire to testify their deep sense of the loss which the Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church of Victoria generally have sustained by that event. Mr. Ballantyne had commended himself to them by his godly simplicity of character, his humility of spirit, his clearness of judgment, his unfeigned love, his holy consistency of conduct, and by his great faith and patience in much bodily weakness and under prolonged affliction. In recognising the hand of God in this solemn dispensation, the Presbytery pray the Lord of the harvest that He may send forth many such labourers to His harvest.

The principal points of business related to Education, Sabbath Observance, the Widows and Orphans' and the Infirm Ministers' Funds.

This Session was made memorable by the passing of an Act rescinding the excision of the dissenting Free Church minority at Geelong in April, 1857. This Act was designed to open the way for the expelled ministers and elders entering the Union.

The following events of the year 1861 are recorded :—

January.—The year opened on the Church with the voice of warning. Rev. John Ballantyne's death was reported as having occurred in October, 1860, at the Scottish metropolis.

Rev. G. M. Reed, of North Melbourne, resigned his charge with the prospect of going to Queensland, and shortly after his resignation, the pastoral tie was dissolved.

February.—Rev. James Ballantyne was appointed to the office of Clerk of the Melbourne Presbytery.

March.—Kalkallo and Wallan Wallan were united in one charge.

April.—The pastoral connection between Rev. George Divorty and the South Yarra congregation was dissolved. Failing health was the cause, and under medical advice he resolved to return to his native air in Scotland.

The Trustees of the Mackenzie-street United Presbyterian Church offered their property for sale to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria ; but the offer was declined.

Rev. Hugh Darling accepted a call from Howe-crescent Church, Emerald Hill, and was in due course inducted.

Rev. A. D. Kininmont, who formerly occupied the Mackenzie-street Church property, recently returned from a visit to Scotland, made application to be admitted into the United Church, and was received by the Home Mission Committee.

June.—Rev. A. Lind received a call from Lancefield, signed by fifty members and adherents. He accepted, and was in due time inducted.

Rev. A. D. Kininmont received a call from North Melbourne and another from Brighton. He accepted the North Melbourne charge, and was inducted 1st July.

July.—Rev. A. M'Nicol was called to Kalkallo and Wallan Wallan. He accepted the call, was released from Rushworth and Whroo, and was duly inducted into the new charge.

Rev. George Adam, recently arrived, from Free Church of Scotland, was admitted by the Home Mission Committee.

August.—A call issued from Brighton, and another from Richmond, in favour of Rev. George Adam. He accepted the call to Brighton and in the following month was regularly inducted.

A call was brought out by the South Yarra congregation on behalf of Rev. George Mackie, of Horsham. Mr. Mackie wrote to the Melbourne Presbytery declining the responsibility of prosecuting the call before the Church Courts, and the session of Horsham congregation sent a paper containing strong reasons why the call, in present circumstances, should not be prosecuted. The matter was

committed to the judgment of the Ballaarat Presbytery, with the ultimate result that the call was set aside.

A Church was erected at Woodend, and the Presbyterians there desired the services of the Rev. J. Meek, of Gisborne, in connection with his present charge, by a suitable arrangement. It was decided that the petitioners should be formed into a congregation and should form part of Mr. Meek's charge.

Rev. T. Craig, of Essendon, having obtained a call from a congregation in another Colony, and being disposed to accept, demitted his charge. Before the end of the month he was released by the Presbytery.

September.—The South Yarra congregation called the Rev. James Adam, of Castlemaine, but the call was declined.

November.—A scheme was put in operation for raising £3,000, in order to pay the passage of ministers who might agree to emigrate with a view to supply the necessities of the Colony.

An incident transpired which interested the Presbyterians in Melbourne who knew and appreciated the Rev. Dr. Mackay, formerly of St. Andrew's, Carlton. He had been settled in Sydney, but had recently embarked at that port for Scotland. He was now in the Bay at Melbourne on his return journey home. A deputation from the Presbytery waited upon him with an address.

December.—Rev. W. Leishman, an ordained minister from New South Wales, was admitted, on application, by the Home Mission Committee.

An encouraging opening presented itself at Ballan for originating a new cause.

ASSEMBLY, 2ND APRIL, 1861. REV. JAMES BALLANTYNE, MODERATOR.

There had been five inductions, one resignation, one translation, and one death.

Induction—The Rev. James Scott—Bacchus Marsh.
,, ,, J. Sutherland—Newstead.
,, ,, J. Adam—Castlemaine.
,, ,, W. Whan, Skipton.
,, ,, G. Mackie, Horsham.

Resignation—Rev. G. M'Culloch Reed—North Melbourne.
Translation—Rev. J. S. Moir—Port Albert and Tarraville.
*Death—Rev. James Clow, at Queenscliff, the father and pioneer of the Presbyterian Church in Victoria.

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*MEMORIAL MINUTE.

The Assembly feel called upon to record their deep sense of the loss sustained by the Presbyterian Church in this Colony through the lamented death of the Rev. James Clow. Venerable in years, and matured in wisdom and Christian experience, his presence in the Church Courts was always acknowledged by marks of the deepest reverence and respect, which was especially shown by his being elected First Moderator of the General Assembly. Long aware, from the nature of the disease which at length carried him off, that there was literally but a step between him and death, his mind had been for many years constantly directed to the necessity of preparation for that solemn event, and all the days of his appointed time did he wait till his change came, never ceasing to hold forth the Word of Life, and

There were seventeen items of business, but none of them of very special interest.

The number of ministers on the roll of Assembly was sixty-one.

ASSEMBLY, P.R.N., 17TH JUNE, 1861. REV. JAMES BALLANTYNE, MODERATOR.

There were only two items of business, one of them especially pressing:—1. The disturbed relations which had arisen between Rev. A. Begg and his congregation at Warrnambool. The issue of the whole matter was the minister's resignation.

2. The scheme for procuring an additional supply of ministers from the Fatherland.

ASSEMBLY, P.R.N., 7TH AUGUST, 1861. REV. JAMES BALLANTYNE, MODERATOR.

This special meeting was called for the purpose of considering what action should be taken by the Assembly in a suit at law instituted to dispossess their congregation at Lethbridge of their property.

The Assembly held that they were precluded from acting in the case.

ASSEMBLY, 31ST OCTOBER, 1861. REV. ANDREW LOVE, MODERATOR.

During the second half-year there had been ten inductions, two resignations, one translation, and one death.

Induction	—Rev.	J. H. Darling—Howe-crescent Church, Emerald Hill.
,,	,,	W. Lind—Lancefield.
,,	,,	A. D. Kininmont—North Melbourne.
,,	,,	G. Adam—Brighton.
,,	,,	T. M. Fraser—High Church, Geelong.
,,	,,	J. H. M'Lachlan—Amherst and Back Creek.
,,	,,	P. Mercer—Fryerstown and Taradale.
,,	,,	D. Moore—Inglewood.
,,	,,	J. Low—Guildford.
,,	,,	J. Downes—Lake Learmonth.
Resignation	,,	T. Craig—Essendon.
,,	,,	A. Begg—Warrnambool.
Translation	,,	A. M'Nicol—Donnybrook and Wallan Wallan.
*Death	,,	E. M'Donald—Kyneton.

to exhibit the graces of a simple and an unaffected piety, which placed him before the world as truly a man of God—an epistle of Christ known and read of all men. And if no words of prayer were heard to fall from his lips in his sudden call, the Assembly rejoice to think how he had lived in prayer and holy communion with God, and how he was fitted, from his deep experience of that peace which passeth understanding, to exclaim with Simon—"Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

* MEMORIAL MINUTE.

It having seemed good to the Lord in His all-wise and mysterious arrangements to call away our esteemed brother, the Rev. E. M'Donald, to his rest and reward, the Presbytery deem it fitting to record their high estimation of his worth and devotedness. Mr. M'Donald departed this life at Glenloth, on

No fewer than thirty-three points of business were put down for discussion.

The Assembly roll numbered sixty-five ministers.

The business transacted at this meeting related chiefly to the practicability of establishing a Theological Hall for the training of a native ministry—admission of newly-arrived ministers—an improved selection of hymns—rules and forms—the publication of a magazine—the employment of catechists—and the reports of Standing Committees.

The following motion of special interest was adopted:—"The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria feel called upon to record the great satisfaction afforded them by the deliverance of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland on the basis of the Church Union lately effected in this Colony, after a long and deeply interesting discussion, on the 30th May last. They feel thankful for the singular clearness and ability with which the Standards of this Church were vindicated from the misrepresentations of adversaries, and shown to embody and conserve every one of those scriptural principles which are essential to the purity and independence of the Church of Christ. They unfeignedly rejoice in the decision in favour of Union as a means of greatly strengthening this infant Church."

The following is a summary of occurrences during the year 1862:—

January.—Rev. James Paterson, travelling evangelist, and licentiate of the Free Church of Scotland, received a call from fifty residents in Minaro to become their settled minister. He was appointed to labour for six months in the district.

Rev. P. Mercer, of Taradale and Fryerstown, was called to Richmond. He accepted the call, and was inducted the following month.

March.—A call from Essendon issued in favour of Rev. D. M'Murtrie, but matters were not ripe for settlement.

Mr. W. Pentland applied for admission into the service of the Church as catechist. His application was referred to the Assembly; meanwhile he was appointed to labour at Ballan, which was put under the charge of Rev. James Scott. He wished his ordination recognised, which he had received from the Wesleyan Body in America.

Rev. John Hampshire, an ordained minister of the Congregational Body, applied for admission into the Church. A Committee was appointed to deal with the case. He had laboured many years as a lay preacher among the Wesleyans, and latterly had been ordained by the Congregationalists.

May.—Rev. George Mackie, of Horsham, having been recently

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the Avoca, on the 25th ult. (July), and truly may it be said that for him "to live was Christ and to die was gain." It is peculiarly gratifying to know that in his closing hours he was enabled so calmly to avow his resignation to the Divine will, and so unwaveringly to testify his joyous confidence in Him whom he had faithfully preached.

called, was inducted into the pastoral charge of the South Yarra congregation

June.—Rev. I. Hetherington intimated that the lease of the late Scots Church premises, South Melbourne (Prahran), to the Ladies' Benevolent Society for twenty-one years, agreed to on 17th September, had been completed.

Rev. Mr. Dron, who had been licensed by the Free Church of Scotland in 1848, applied for admission into the Church. In 1851 he was appointed by the Colonial Committee, Edinburgh, to labour in New Zealand. Having followed ministerial work there for some time, he was obliged to return to Scotland for his wife's health. He was employed doing mission work in Strathblane, near Glasgow, but was induced to emigrate to Victoria to work in connection with the Free Church minority. Having felt himself in difficulties, he was induced to make this application. He was cordially received.

Rev. John M'Ilfatrick was received by the Home Mission Committee into Union.

Rev. John Baird, formerly a Wesleyan Methodist minister, applied for admission. He had certificate of ordination and other testimonials. The matter was referred to a Committee.

Rev. J. G. Paton, missionary from the New Hebrides, addressed the Melbourne Presbytery, appealing for help in order to purchase a mission ship. The Presbytery promised to do all in their power to help him in the good work.

July.—Rev. Mr. Baird was recommended to the Assembly for admission as an ordained missionary. Meanwhile it was intended that he should receive employment.

Rev. J. S. Boyd, having been called, was duly ordained to the charge of Essendon and Keilor.

August.—Rev. J. Meek was relieved of his charge of Woodend.

Mr. John M'Cutchan was licensed to preach the everlasting gospel.

Rev. P. Mercer had preached several times at Hawthorn in the Town Hall, a managing Committee was appointed, and the attendance at the services was increasing.

Presbyterians at Footscray and Maidstone applied to have someone sent to preach among them.

September.—Rev. W. Mitchell, having been called to Kilmore, was inducted into the charge of the congregation there.

October.—The Melbourne Presbytery agreed to transmit an overture to the Assembly, relative to the South Seas mission.

Arrangements were made for the examination of students.

An inquiry was agreed upon as to the state of matters at Lancefield.

November.—Application to the Assembly was resolved upon for leave to take on trial for license a number of students. These were Messrs. Smith, Hannay, Menzies, and Souter, besides Mr. Wallace, who was under the superintendence of the Ballaarat Presbytery.

December.—An extract minute of a meeting of the Howe-crescent Church, Emerald Hill (now South Melbourne), was presented to

the Presbytery, containing a list of names for the election of trustees to hold the site in Clarendon-street recently granted by Government to said congregation for the erection of a place of worship.

A call to Rev. S. A. Hamilton had issued from the united congregations of Tarnagulla and Eddington in the Presbytery of Castle maine.

ASSEMBLY, May, 1862. Rev. Andrew Love, Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	W. Leishman—Maryborough.
,,	,,	H. M'Kail—Carngham.
Resignation	,,	D. M'Murtrie—Smeaton.
,,	,,	E. Blair—Wickliffe.
Translation	,,	P. Mercer—Richmond.
,,	,,	R. Henderson—Kyneton.
,,	,,	J. M'L. Abernethy, M.A.—Eaglehawk.
,,	,,	J. Anderson—Warrnambool.
*Death	,,	J. Adam—Castlemaine.

The items of business were thirteen in number.

The roll of ministers counted sixty-six.

Rev. Dr. Cairns resigned his tutorship in training students for the ministry.

At this meeting the Assembly were feeling their way into important departments of work. Although engrossed with efforts after Church consolidation and expansion, they found time to show their sympathy with Her Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria, and to adopt an address to her on the occasion of the death of the Prince Consort.

The items of business embraced such topics as the special duties of Presbyterians—the importance of a Church periodical and the necessity of sustaining the *Presbyterian Messenger*—the duty of promoting the interests of sound and efficient public education—the propriety of taking steps as soon as possible to establish a Theological Hall in order to train students for the ministry—the need in the meantime of a special fund to pay the expense of bringing ministers from Home—and the obligation to adopt measures for sending the gospel to the heathen.

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*Memorial Minute.

Deeply impressed with the solemn dispensation which has deprived them and the Church at large of a "brother beloved," the Presbytery desire to record their sense of the great loss which they have sustained through his death. Mr. Adam was a man of high Christian principle, of extensive and accurate attainments, of matured judgment, of catholic sympathies, of unwearied diligence, of popular gifts, and of a devout spirit. His great acceptability as a preacher and a pastor exerted a powerful influence in hastening and consolidating the Union between the two congregations which, previous to his coming, had been formed in Castlemaine. During his brief but earnest ministry he was honoured to do a good and great work. Few ministers have ever entered on their career in this land with higher promise or brighter prospects. By all his co-presbyters he was much and deservedly esteemed.

ASSEMBLY, 6TH NOVEMBER, 1862. REV. D. M'DONALD, MODERATOR.

During the second half-year, ending with October, there were six inductions and five translations.

Induction	—Rev.	W. Mitchell—Kilmore.
,,	,,	J. S. Boyd—Essendon.
,,	,,	W. Leishman—Maryborough.
,,	,,	D. H. M'Murtrie—Lake Hindmarsh.
,,	,,	W. Matthew—Pleasant Creek.
,,	,,	R. Sutherland—Allansford.
Translation	,,	George Mackie—South Yarra.
,,	,,	P. Simpson—Horsham.
,,	,,	J. Downes—Clunes.

Items of business before the Assembly amounted to thirty-nine in number.

At this meeting there was a reconstruction of Presbyteries. These were—Melbourne, Geelong, Castlemaine, Ballaarat, Wimmera, Mortlake, Hamilton, Beechworth.

The roll of ministers reached the number of seventy.

This November meeting of Assembly is the eighth since the Union, two meetings having been held each year. Business seems to grow on the Assembly, as it should do, with the growth of the Body.

The topics that engaged the attention of the assembled brethren at this meeting were practical and important. Of these, there were the forming and fostering of new congregations—the compilation of hymns of praise—the preparation of a model trust deed—and the provision necessary to be made for widows and orphans. A commencement was made in Foreign mission work by employing Rev. W. Young, formerly of Singapore, to labour among the Chinese resident in Ballaarat. The fund for assisting emigrating ministers had reached £2,046. An increasing interest was manifesting itself both in Home and in Foreign mission work.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR.—1863.

January.—Mr. Souter, student, was appointed to labour as an evangelist in Gippsland, under the supervision of Rev. Mr. Login.

The arrangement made in regard to the training of students for the ministry was the following:—

Rev. P. Mercer, to take Greek, Hebrew, and Critical Exposition.

Rev. G. Adam—Mental Philosophy and Logic.

Rev. J. Ballantyne—Moral Philosophy.

Rev. W. Fraser—Theology and Church History.

The Presbyterians of Newham and Woodend declared their satisfaction with the services of Rev. J. Baird, but they were not able of themselves at present to support ordinances.

February.—Rev. S. A. Hamilton accepted the call to Tarnagulla and Eddington, and was transferred to the Presbytery of Castlemaine for induction.

March.—Rev. W. Mitchell, of Kilmore, was relieved from his charge, and left the Colony for Queensland with a certificate of full standing.

April.—Rev. David Kay, of Genoa Free Church ; Rev. Archibald Crawford, of the Presbyterian Church, Brockville, Canada West ; and Rev. David Renton, probationer from the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, were admitted into connection with the Church.

The congregation of St. Andrew's, Carlton, had met and resolved to break off connection with the Denomination which called itself the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and they sought introduction into the general Presbyterian Union. The congregation were heartily welcomed.

May.—The Presbyterians of Ballan asked the Presbytery of Melbourne to appoint Rev. John Hampshire to settle among them and give them the benefit of stated ordinances, promising to give him an adequate support.

Mr. Hampshire also memorialised the Presbytery, asking them to grant the petition of the people of Ballan, and thereby give him all the privileges of his ordination. The matter was referred to the Commission of Assembly meeting this month.

June.—In accordance with the decision of the Commission, Rev. Dr. Cairns was appointed to go to Ballan to hold recognition services.

July.—Arrangements were made at Mansfield for obtaining the services of a stated ministry.

Wyndham applied for supply of service every alternate Sabbath.

It was resolved to institute inquiry respecting Rev. Mr. Graham, of Benalla, as to his position, sphere, and support.

A call came out from Meredith and Lethbridge in favour of Rev. J. S. Moir, of Tarraville and Port Albert, and he was transferred to Geelong Presbytery for settlement, after accepting the call.

Messrs. Hannay and Smith, students of divinity, were licensed.

August.—Rev. H. H. Finlay was admitted into the Church from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Mr. Menzies, student of divinity, was licensed to preach the Gospel of Christ.

September.—Rev. H. Thomson, officiating at Mansfield, received a call from the Presbyterians there. He was appointed to continue his services in the district.

October.—A Committee was appointed to adopt measures with the view of bringing various ministers, if possible, into the Assembly who stood aloof. The ministers referred to were those of the Free dissentient minority. In the following month the Committee was discharged.

November.—The Presbyterians of Melton gave a call to Rev. James Lambie. Those of Sunbury and Greenhills acquiesced, and wished to share with Melton in the services and the support. The call was accepted, and the induction in due course was effected.

Rev. P. Mercer, of Richmond, was called to Deniliquin, New South Wales, and, having accepted, he was transferred to Castlemaine Presbytery for the new settlement in Riverina.

Rev. J. Dick, from the United Presbyterian congregation, Busby, near Glasgow, had applied for admission. He presented his Presby-

terial certificate. Meanwhile, he engaged in ministerial work at Avoca, and next at Woodend and Newham.

Rev. C. J. Baird was examined as to his attainments and views of doctrine, and was recommended to the Assembly for full ministerial status.

Yea presented an encouraging opening for the settlement of a minister.

December.—A call from Kilmore was brought out in favour of Mr. M'Rae, probationer, signed by 200 persons. The call was accepted, trial exercises prescribed, and the ordination was effected on the 20th of the following month.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, MAY, 1863. REV. D. M'DONALD, MODERATOR.

There were no longer half-yearly meetings of Assembly. The meeting in May of this year was a COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY.

There were thirteen pieces of business in the programme.

The Melbourne Presbytery were authorised to take Mr. Wallace on trial for license.

The Presbytery of Melbourne were empowered to receive Mr. Hampshire as a missionary, on their being satisfied with his qualifications, in accordance with the regulations of the Church.

It was remitted to the Committee on the Mission to the South Seas to prepare a definite scheme for the establishment of the said mission.

The Presbytery of Ballaarat were instructed to proceed with the settlement of Rev. M. Dixon at Smeaton.

A meeting of the Assembly (P.R.N.) was held in September for the purpose of presenting an address to His Excellency Sir Henry Barkly, K.C.B., on the occasion of his leaving the colony at the expiry of his term of office.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 5TH NOVEMBER, 1863. REV. SAMUEL KELSO, MODERATOR.

There were seventy-six ministers in the eight Presbyteries.

Induction	—Rev.	A. Robertson—Castlemaine.
,,	,,	D. Fraser—Ballaarat East.
,,	,,	M. Dixon—Smeaton and Bullarook.
,,	,,	R. Hamilton, M.A.—Learmonth and Springs.
,,	,,	D. Renton—Carngham and Linton's.
,,	,,	D. Kay—Wickliffe, Chatsworth, and Hexham.
,,	,,	W. Robertson—Belfast and Tower Hill.
,,	,,	G. Minty—Chiltern.
,,	,,	W. Graham—Casterton and Coleraine.
Resignation	,,	W. Mitchell—Kilmore.
,,	,,	J. Steele, M.A.—Heathcote.
Translation	,,	S. A. Hamilton—Tarnagulla and Eddington.
,,	,,	J. S. Moir—Lethbridge and Meredith.
,,	,,	J. M'Roberts—Branxholme and Emmerella.
,,	,,	W. Leishman—Heathcote.
,,	,,	H. M'Kail—St. Arnaud.

Admissions from other Churches—

Rev. W. Duncan, a minister of the United Presbyterian Church.

Rev. L. Dobinson, after examination in all the usual branches.

Rev. C. J. J. Baird, after full examination in classics, philosophy, and especially theology.

There were forty-four items in the programme.

It was agreed that Mr. J. W. Inglis, divinity student, should be taken on trial for license by the Melbourne Presbytery.

The case of Rev. H. M'Lachlan, minister of Talbot, was referred to the Assembly. After full consideration, the Assembly dissolved the pastoral tie.

Rev. J. Don, with the congregation of Mt. Gambier, were admitted into connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, although situated within the limits of South Australia.

A special Commission of Assembly was appointed on Union with the outstanding ministers and congregations, with power to receive them into connection upon their application for admission.

The Assembly expressed their entire satisfaction with the prosperous condition of the Scotch College, and their grateful appreciation of the important services of Mr. Morrison, the principal.

A Committee was appointed to prepare a draft of one hundred and fifty hymns to be used in public worship.

Steps were taken to promote the interest of the Church in the New Hebrides Mission.

An address was adopted to be presented to His Excellency Sir Charles Darling, K.C.B., Governor-in-Chief of the Colony of Victoria, and Vice-Admiral of the same, on the occasion of his arrival as representative of Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

The Assembly passed a vote of thanks to the Rev. James Ballantyne for his able and important services to the Church as editor of the *Messenger and Review*.

The business of the Church was put under the management of twelve committees.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR.—1864.

January.—Rev. J. Hampshire received permission to solemnise marriages in terms of the Assembly's resolution.

Mr. William Souter, student, passed his examination satisfactorily, and was licensed to preach the gospel.

Rev. John Bagley, who had been an Independent minister in Ireland, applied for admission into the Church. Previously to his leaving Home, he had applied to the Irish Presbyterian Assembly to be received, and by a small majority it was decided to postpone their decision. Finding it would be inconvenient and injurious to remain till the matter was resumed, he resolved on leaving for Australia. The Presbytery agreed to subject him to examination, after which it was decided to refer the case to the Commission of Assembly.

Mr. M'Rae underwent examination with a view to his ordination, and was solemnly set apart to the pastoral office, at Kilmore, on the 20th inst.

February.—Whittlesea, Mayfield, and Janefield being one charge, it was arranged that service should be conducted at Mayfield every Lord's Day in the afternoon, and at Janefield and Whittlesea on alternate mornings and evenings.

Mr. Login, of Sale, applied to have a minister stationed at Stratford, who should be able to aid him as an assessor in the formation of a session. The application was recommended to the Home Mission Committee.

A call was presented from the Presbyterians at Wood's Point to Mr. M'Cutchan. The ordination was effected on 12th March.

March.—Rev. James Galloway was introduced to the Presbytery as a minister recently arrived from Scotland. He had belonged to the Free Church. The Home Mission Committee had admitted him into the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

A call from the Presbyterians of Yea was presented to Rev. Mr. Murdoch, which he accepted. The induction was appointed for the 18th inst. The call was signed by eighty-five members and adherents, and the minimum stipend was promised.

April.—Rev. Peter Brown, formerly of the United Presbyterian Church, Wishaw, Scotland, was announced as another minister who had been admitted into the Church.

A call from Port Albert and Tarraville was given in favour of Rev. Wazir Beg, M.D. He accepted, and the ordination was carried into effect in the Scots Church on the evening of the 12th inst.

May.—The Rev. Peter Gunn, one of the distinguished pioneers of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, departed this life.

June.—Mr. William Souter, probationer, was called to Whittlesea, Janefield, and Mayfield. He accepted the call, and was ordained on 26th July.

Pentland Hills congregation was constituted an independent charge, and Rev. J. Scott would confine his labours to Bacchus Marsh.

A deputation from Presbyterians of Hawthorn asked from the Presbytery a supply of ordinances. Rev. P. Brown was appointed to minister to them for a month.

Trustees for Church property at Wood's Point were appointed, viz.—George Gleig Scott, Robert Scott, James Whitelaw, Charles Hutchinson, John M'Dougall.

July.—Mr. Alexander Mackie was admitted to the Theological Hall.

A call from Richmond issued in favour of Rev. John Bagley. It was signed by forty-two members and fifty-two adherents. The call was accepted, and the induction was effected on the 21st.

The congregation of St. Andrew's, Carlton, called Rev. A. M'Gregor, signed by two hundred and one persons. He accepted the invitation, and, after trials for ordination, he was solemnly set apart to his pastoral charge on 11th August.

The Pentridge and the Campbellfield congregations were united so as to form one charge.

Mr. James Groundwater, student of divinity, and recently arrived from Scotland, requested the Presbytery to say what further theological studies he would require to prosecute, with a view to his obtaining license.

Mr. D. Brunton solicited occasional employment as a preacher or evangelist. He had passed through the Arts curriculum, and had attended for some time the Free Church Theological Hall in Scotland. He was referred to the Home Mission Committee.

The attention of the Melbourne Presbytery had been called to the decease of Rev. Dr. John Bonar, Convener of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland.*

August.—Mr. J. W. Inglis was called to Sandridge. The call was signed by one hundred and thirty-seven persons, and all trials having been sustained, he was ordained to his charge on the 23rd.

Trustees were appointed for the Melton congregation, viz.—Alexander M'Intosh, Alexander M'Pherson, Archibald M'Leod, Alexander Blackwood, and William Jeffray Buchanan.

September.—Rev. Mr. Graham, recently arrived from Sydney, was received by the Home Mission Committee.

Presbyterians at Hawthorn were formed into a congregation.

It was agreed to make application to the Government for a portion of the grant made for the employment of gaol chaplains to be placed under the administration of the Presbytery of Melbourne.

October.—Trustees for the Church at Romsey were—William Mackinnon, Thomas Newbigging, David Cuthbert, Archibald Prentice, and Alexander Stewart.

Rev. Robert Henderson, of Kyneton, was authorised to baptize the children of Presbyterian families resident in Newham until arrangements could be made for the regular supply of Divine ordinances to them.

The draft copy of a Hymn Book, which was prepared by a Committee of the General Assembly, and which had been sent down to Presbyteries, was approved generally by the Presbytery of Melbourne.

The question of appointing Provincial Synods was not entertained.

November.—An application was made by the Presbyterians at Pentland Hills for a moderation.

Dr. W. Beg resigned his charge at Port Albert and Tarraville, on the ground of his health. The following month the tie was dissolved.

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* The Presbytery felt it to be their duty to record their high appreciation of his character and services to this Church. The Presbyterianism of this Colony had been largely indebted to his sympathy and exertions. The prospects of Presbyterianism in the Colony were deeply involved in the question of the Union of the Presbyterian denominations. His correspondence manifested the wisdom and the simplicity of love, and a mind entirely free from the prejudice of sect or party, an honest desire to forward the object in view, and to remove every obstacle with which it was possible or competent for him to deal. To the Presbyterian Church of Victoria he acted the part of an earnest and warm-hearted friend to the close of his fruitful life.

It was reported that the congregation of Campbellfield, at a meeting duly called, had agreed that a sum of £270 belonging to the congregation, and in the custody of the legal representatives of the late Rev. P. Gunn, should be divided into two equal portions—the one-half should be appropriated to the repair of the manse premises, and the other paid over to the family of the late Mr. Gunn in full discharge of all claims for arrears of stipend and otherwise.

December.—Rev. D. Galloway, who recently arrived, was received into ministerial fellowship by the Home Mission Committee.

Rev. John Roberts made application to be received into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. He had been minister of a Congregational Church in South Australia, but he had adopted the views and the Church polity which were held by the Presbyterians. A Committee were appointed to confer with him.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 3rd May, 1864. Rev. S. Kelso, Moderator.

There were only two items of business before the meeting. These were—1. A reference from the Presbytery of Melbourne respecting the admission of Rev. J. Bagley.

2. A petition from the Rev. J. Greig.

The application of Rev. J. Bagley was so strongly recommended, and so well supported by testimonials, that it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Bagley be received as a minister of this Church.

The petition of Rev. J. Greig set forth that he was a probationer of this Church, that he had arrived in the Colony over twelve months ago, and had been received by the Home Mission Committee, under whose direction he had been labouring in various congregations. Mr. Greig found his usefulness seriously impaired through his inability to dispense ordinances, on which ground he asked the Commission to authorise the Presbytery to confer ordination on him. The application was unanimously granted, and the Presbytery of Beechworth was instructed to take him on trial for ordination.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 2nd November, 1864. Rev. James Nish, Moderator.

The roll of Assembly at this meeting numbered ninety-six, being an increase of sixteen over the previous year.

There had been nineteen inductions, two translations, one resignation, and one death during the past twelve months.

Induction—Rev. James Lambie—Melton, Green Hills, and Sunbury.
,, ,, D. M'Rae—Kilmore.
,, ,, J. W. M'Cutchan, ordained—Wood's Point.
,, ,, A. Murdoch—Yea.
,, ,, W. Beg, M.D., ordained—Port Albert and Tarraville.
,, ,, J. Bagley—Richmond.
,, ,, W. Souter, ordained—Janefield, Mayfield, and Whittlesea.

Induction	—Rev.	A. M'Gregor, ordained—St. Andrew's, Carlton.
,,	,,	J. W. Inglis, ordained—Sandridge.
,,	,,	J. Brownlie, ordained—Barrabool Hills and Duneed.
,,	,,	C. J. Baird—Inglewood.
,,	,,	H. H. Finlay—Dunolly and Bet Bet.
,,	,,	A. Crawford—Burrumbeet and Windermere.
,,	,,	W. C. Wallace, ordained—Staffordshire Reef and Pitfield.
,,	,,	R. Falconer, ordained—Penshurst, Dunkeld, and Caramut.
,,	,,	R. A. Caldwell—Mount Gambier.
,,	,,	J. Service, ordained—Lower Avoca.
,,	,,	J. D. Robertson, ordained—Wangaratta and Oxley.
,,	,,	J. Greig, ordained—Yackandandah.
Translation	,,	P. Mercer—Echuca and Deniliquin.
,,	,,	J. Nicol—Talbot.
Resignation	,,	D. H. M'Murtrie.
*Death	,,	P. Gunn—Campbellfield.

Points of business before the Assembly were in number thirty-four.

There were thirteen Standing Committees.

Some of the principal subjects discussed in the Assembly referred to the compilation of a volume of Hymns for use in public worship —the question of Sabbath observance, and means recommended for restraining various forms of Sabbath desecration—the duty of raising funds for the endowment of a Theological Hall, aiming at £25,000, but making a commencement as soon as £6,000 were obtained—the propriety of engaging the services of Rev. J. Geddie, labouring in Aneityum under the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, to be the missionary of this Church—the extension of gospel ordinances to the needful districts of the interior of the Colony—and the establishment of an Infirm Ministers' Fund.

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* Rev. Peter Gunn, Campbellfield, was recently called to his rest. The Presbytery agreed to put on permanent record their sense of the loss sustained by the Church in his removal. Of late years Mr. Gunn's ailments were such as tended to restrict his exertions and consequent usefulness. As one of the pioneer ministers of the Colony he had, during a lengthened period of service, been abundant in labours, and even to the last he journeyed to the full extent of his strength to preach the gospel, particularly to the Highlanders, to whom he felt himself in a special sense called upon to minister. Mr. Gunn was remarkable for his high integrity, an unworldly spirit, unobtrusive manners, and generous self-denial, and his memory will long be cherished, especially by the families of the earlier colonists of Victoria, for the interest which he showed in their welfare, and the fatigues which he underwent in ministering to their souls in a poor and widely-scattered district. Though Mr. Gunn was comparatively little known beyond the bounds of his own Presbytery, he was much respected by the brethren who knew him for his prudent counsels and his knowledge of ecclesiastical law.

CHAPTER II.

FREE CHURCH SYNOD—1857-1861.

After the expulsion of the Free Church minority at Geelong, in April, 1857, the dissentients met, as agreed amongst themselves, on the 14th of the same month, in John Knox Church, Melbourne. The Synod was duly constituted, and Rev. William Miller was chosen Moderator. They claimed to be an adjourned meeting of the true Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The four ministers and three elders asserted their right to have the custody of the records in the possession of the major party, and resolved to make a demand on Rev. John Tait, Clerk to the Free Church Synod majority, to give them up. They associated with them, as a deliberative member, the Rev. William Nicholson, of Chalmers Church, Hobart Town. Mr. Nicholson addressed the meeting, expressing "his full confidence in the position, the claims, and the fidelity of this Synod, and declared his conviction that it alone represented the principles and testimony of the Free Church uncompromised in this Colony."

They agreed to open correspondence with the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, to draw up a statement declaring the present position of this Church, and expressing the Synod's entire confidence in, and firm attachment to, the principles laid down in the claim of rights and protest of the Free Church of Scotland, and their approbation of her public testimony and position, as distinguished from that of the Establishment.

Further, the Moderator was instructed—"To write to the Honourable the Chief Secretary, to intimate that Rev. William Henderson, of Williamstown, is not now known to this Court as Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and to request that all communications from the Government to the said Church may be addressed to the Rev. William Miller, Moderator of the same."

A Committee was appointed—"To prepare a statement for the information of the adherents of this Church, explaining the principles on which the Church is founded, and showing the prejudicial effect which a late ill-considered scheme for Union was fitted to have upon them."

Another Committee was appointed—"To watch over and protect the property of the Synod, and also to consider the expediency of organising a Sustentation Fund."

The vacant congregation of Bellarine appeared by deputation before the Synod, declaring their adherence to this Church, and craving a supply of ministerial services.

On 16th June, 1857, Rev. John M'Dougall, minister of the Gaelic congregation, Geelong, applied to be recognised as a minister in

connection with this Synod. He had been, and still is, in an infirm state of health, and had not been able at an earlier period to decide on his proper path of duty between the claims of the two Synods. His request was cordially granted.

On 1st September Rev. Alexander Waters Sinclair, lately an ordained minister of the Synod of Eastern Australia, now resident at Brunswick, laid on the table a commission from the Kirk Session of the congregation, appointing him to act as representative elder. On 6th January, 1858, his name was added to the roll of members of Synod, entitling him to the benefits derivable from the Widows' Fund, subject to his compliance with the rules, he being an ordained minister and officiating under their jurisdiction.

The attention of the Synod was called to the deliverance of the Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland in May last, on the subject of Union negotiations in Victoria, to the effect—"That the Assembly, having learned the proposals which have been made in Australia for Union with other Denominations of Presbyterians, do not feel called on, in present circumstances, to express any opinion on the subject, but have every confidence that the brethren there will not consent to any proposal which compromises the principles of this Church, and trust they will enter into no Union with others at the expense of disunion among themselves."

On 5th January, 1858, Mr. Peter M'Pherson applied to be taken on trial for license. He produced certificates from Rev. Drs. Cunningham and Bannerman, in which he was highly commended for his attainments as evinced in the usual examinations. The Synod agreed to prescribe trials. After successive examinations, he was duly licensed to preach the gospel on 10th February, 1858.

On 6th January there was read a letter from the Moderator of the Synod of Victoria, inviting the brethren of this Synod to a Conference on Union, to be held that evening. No action thereon was taken.

On 9th February Rev. Robert Fleming made application for admission into the Synod. Mr. Fleming having been in connection with the other Free Synod, it was deemed necessary that he should furnish reliable information as to his resignation having been accepted. In July and August documentary evidence was furnished of his disjunction from the Major Synod. The dissentient Synod delayed accepting the application, but, on the 14th December, Mr. Fleming renewed his desire for admission, and the Synod, having obtained fuller light, gave him a place on their roll of ministers.

On 10th February Rev. Alexander M'Intyre, from the Synod of Eastern Australia, applied to be admitted into the Synod. He presented highly satisfactory testimonials from the Synod and from the Presbytery of Maitland. He had been labouring four years as an ordained minister, but was ordered, on account of his health, to leave and seek an abode in a cooler climate. The Synod agreed to receive him, and to allot to him such an amount of work as would suit his strength. At the same time, Rev. J. M'Dougall appeared to ask leave of absence for the recruiting of his health, as he felt unequal

to all the duties of his office in the Geelong Gaelic congregation. His application was granted, and Mr. M'Intyre was recommended to occupy his place, undertaking as much duty as his health would permit.

Mr. M'Dougall was never able to resume work. He lingered in a condition of increasing depression till he expired on 29th April, 1858.

On 20th April, the Moderator (Rev. W. Miller) read letters of correspondence between himself on the one hand, and Rev. A. Simpson, Rev. D. M'Donald, and the Government on the other, on the subject of grants-in-aid. From this it appeared that the Major Synod agreed to accept three-fourths of the whole amount allotted by Government to the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and to relinquish the remaining fourth in favour of the Minor Synod. This Synod agreed to accept this as a temporary expedient, without prejudice.

There was also read a letter from D. Ogilvy, Esq., on behalf of the other Synod, prescribing an acceptance of the Union now being negotiated as a condition of reconciliation, without offering to cancel the deed of expulsion at Geelong. It was agreed that the letter should not be received.

On 5th October Rev. A. W. Sinclair received, at the hands of the Synod, a call from the Bellarine congregation to be their pastor, and at the same time accepted the invitation. He was duly inducted on the 21st October, 1858.

On 14th December the Synod met to consider the report of the Committee entrusted with the business connected with the deliverance of the late General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, and the correspondence with D. Ogilvy, Esq., to which the said deliverance has given rise. They agreed to declare—"That they observe with regret that the other party in this correspondence still speak of the unconstitutional Act of April, 1857, as one which admits of being justified; this Synod also declare that justice will not have been done to the claim of truth and righteousness until those who enforced said Act shall cease to speak of it as a proceeding to which they were shut up, and shall rescind it from their records, in evidence that they have fallen from it *simpliciter*."

At this meeting there was laid on the table, at the request of a member of the Synod of Victoria, a basis of Articles having in view to unite the whole of the Presbyterians of the Colony.

18th January, 1859.—The Synod instructed the Property Committee to watch over the interests of the Church in reference to the Bill that has been brought into Parliament, the Bill having for its object the security of property to those who should enter into Union. By the action of this Committee a list of Church properties secured to the Synod will be found in the appendix (D).

8th March.—The draft of a letter to the Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland was considered.

5th April.—It was reported to the Synod that the amount of

Government aid which fell to their share was £358. This, it was agreed, should be divided equally among Rev. Messrs. M'Vean, Paul, Maxwell, and Fleming. The building fund received an equal amount. In making this report, the Moderator read a correspondence between himself and the Treasurer, from which it appeared that Rev. D. M'Donald had objected to this Church receiving payment of the above sums; also, that the Treasurer had arrested the payment of the Government aid to both parties until a mutual arrangement had been arrived at.

8th April.—A large deputation appeared before the Synod from St. Andrew's congregation. They came to express their attachment to the principles of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and to give in their adherence to this Synod as the Synod of the only Free Presbyterian Church in the Colony. They laid on the table a series of resolutions agreed to at a public meeting of the congregation on 4th February last; also, a resolution passed on 22nd February last, and a resolution adopted by a majority of one on 19th January. In accordance with these resolutions, they begged the Synod to take the congregation under their jurisdiction, and to appoint such ministerial supplies as were in their power to give.

The Synod agreed to the petition, received the congregation into Union and fellowship, and appointed the Moderator to preach in St. Andrew's as soon as he could arrange. A Committee was appointed to advise with the congregation on matters affecting their interests.

16th August.—It was reported by Mr. M'Intyre that he had been invited to visit Ascot and open a new Church in connection with this Synod. On 4th July last a resolution had been passed at a meeting in Ascot, from which it appeared that a number of persons—chiefly those who spoke the Gaelic tongue—adhering to the principles of the Free Presbyterian Church, had associated for the purpose of public worship, had erected a place of meeting, and were resolved to look to this Synod for a minister.

It appeared also that a meeting of persons adhering to this Church had been held in Portland, and they resolved to put themselves under the spiritual superintendence of this Synod.

There were read two letters of friendly correspondence and sympathy from Tasmania and Eastern Australia.

Now that the Union had been consummated, embracing the great body of Presbyterians in the Colony, and that the Free Church of Scotland had manifested a decided approval of the basis of that Union as one that did not compromise the Free Church principles, the Synod felt the gravity of their position, and the necessity of taking steps to put themselves right with the parent Church. The question of sending a deputy Home, to explain and vindicate their position as a separate Synod, had been before them for a considerable time. And now it was definitely proposed and agreed to—"That in view of the difficulties which have arisen in the relations of this Synod to the Free Church of Scotland, and the many vacant congregations which the Synod has no means of supplying, Mr.

Miller be appointed a deputy to Scotland, for the purpose of obtaining ministers for this Synod, with power to represent the Church before the Courts of the Free Church of Scotland as he may have opportunity and see cause." A Committee was appointed to carry out the resolution.

29th November.—A deputation from St. Andrew's congregation appeared before the Synod, and laid on the table a paper relative to the settlement of a minister, in which "the congregation empower the deputy to Scotland, in conjunction with certain ministers of the Free Church named in the document, to select a minister for them."

The Committee on a deputy to Scotland had a favourable report to give. They had met with ten congregations, and raised the sum of £1,229 : but they recommended Mr. Miller, if possible, not to exceed £400 in his personal expenses. It was arranged that Mr. Peter M'Pherson should supply John Knox pulpit in Mr. Miller's absence, either personally or by exchange.

1st May, 1860.—It was reported to the Synod that the late Mr. Sprout, of Bellarine, had made a bequest of £240, with interest, to the Free Church of that place, while the late Mr. William Williamson had bequeathed £2,000 to the Free Church of Victoria. To secure this some definite steps were requisite to be taken by the Synod, and a Committee was appointed.

14th August.—The Moderator, Rev. A. M'Vean, informed the Synod that during the past six months a movement had taken place in Pentridge (now Coburg), which resulted in the erection of a very comfortable Church, and he believed the time was come when Brunswick and Pentridge might be disjoined.

15th August.—The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church met. During the morning sederunt a deputation, consisting of the Rev. I. Hetherington, Rev. James Ballantyne, Rev. A. J. Campbell, and Mr. John Ogilvy, entered and expressed their anxious desire to make a statement to the Court. Being requested to proceed, they assured the Court of their anxiety to know on what grounds a satisfactory and honourable Union could be effected between the Free Church and the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The deputation were assured that proposals having in view the advancement of religion in this Colony, or coming from any Church, would be favourably considered by the Free Presbyterian Church, in so far as such proposals were in accordance with her own principles. Mr. Hetherington thanked the Court for the kindly manner in which the deputation had been received, and then they withdrew.

At a subsequent period of the sederunt the statement made by the deputation was taken into consideration, and the Synod, having in view the paper received from the Rev. W. Miller, now in Scotland, as well as the statement made by the deputation, authorised the Moderator (Rev. A. M'Vean) to inform Mr. Hetherington that any definite proposal coming from the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria relative to the matter indicated by the deputation would be received by him and be duly considered by the brethren of this Synod.

The Moderator was further instructed to call a *pro re nata* meeting of Synod as soon as such proposal shall have been received.

18th September.—A *pro re nata* meeting of Synod was accordingly held. The proposal from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, inviting the Free Church Synod of Victoria to unite with them, was considered. Should they comply with the invitation, possibly an important step would be taken towards embracing all the members of the Presbyterian community in one united Church.

The result of the deliberation on the proposal was embodied in a series of resolutions, to the effect—"That the Free Synod has never lightly valued Union, when that can be accomplished along with unity of opinion and unity of principles, and that they proposed, as a basis of negotiations, that each Committee shall be authorised to undertake that no connection shall be formed, and no correspondence held, with any Church which admits in its doctrines, discipline, or practice the right of the Civil Magistrate to interfere in the licensing of preachers, the call from a people to a pastor, the ordination of ministers, or in any other act strictly ecclesiastical in its nature.

"The Synod feels more confident in making this proposal, in consequence of Rev. Dr. Bonar having stated, at the last General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, that the Presbyterian Church of Victoria maintained the principles of that Church; and this he stated officially, and no doubt had authority for doing so. The Synod trusts that negotiations on this basis may be brought to a satisfactory conclusion." A Committee of Correspondence on Union was appointed, Mr. W. M. Bell, Convener.

20th November.—A report of the correspondence on Union laid on the table of the Synod was considered. They agreed to record—"That, in answer to a question from the Committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the Committee of this Synod distinctly stated that it did not see how that Church could rescind the Act of the Synod of the then Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, passed at Geelong on the 8th April, 1857; that the Presbyterian Church of Victoria has, nevertheless, seen fit to pass an Act declaring the afore-mentioned Act to be rescinded; that the Act now passed leaves the fundamental law of Presbytery, as asserted by the said Act of excision, untouched or rather defended; that the Assembly has practically rejected the demand which this Synod laid down as a preliminary to any negotiations for Union; that the Articles of Union on which the Presbyterian Church is founded, especially as shown in the minute of their Committee, of date 19th November, 1860, are capable of different constructions, and admit of an Erastian interpretation; that, therefore, they resolve to proceed no further with a negotiation which plainly implies a design of relinquishing the principles embodied in the protest of the Free Church of Scotland, and the corresponding fundamental Act of this Church, by a compliance with the practice of the Established Church of Scotland."

20th February, 1861.—The brethren took into consideration the commission to be sent to Rev. William Miller, to appear before the

General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, which should meet in May, 1861. They had received extract minutes of the proceedings of the Free Church General Assembly, 18th May, 1860, of the records of the Colonial Committee, 18th April, and 3rd May, 1860. These extracts all indicated that the claims of the Free Church Synod of Victoria, to be regarded as the true and sole representative of Free Church principles, were emphatically disallowed. The advocacy of their peculiar views by Rev. W. Miller, and their reasons for refusing to unite with the general body of Presbyterians in the Colony, failed in convincing the General Assemby in Scotland that they occupied a defensible position. The Synod in Victoria, however, would not own defeat. They would have their delegate to remain for another year, to hold meetings, give addresses, and endeavour to turn the tide in their favour at the next Annual Assembly in Edinburgh. Although at the last Assembly Rev. W. Miller was not received as the regular representative of the Free Church in Victoria, but only as an individual Free Church minister, yet they will renew their commission, and appoint him to appear at the next Assembly to represent their views. They wish the Assembly to understand—

"That their Synod desire the Union of the Presbyterian Churches in Victoria on a proper basis.

"That since 1858 and 1860, when adverse deliverances were issued, circumstances have changed in a very material degree.

"The basis of Union therein referred to has been abandoned.

"The basis since adopted is defective, and grave difficulties have been raised to Union between this Synod and the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

"This Synod instruct Mr. Miller to express their strong desire to maintain friendly relations and ecclesiastical fellowship with the parent Church in Scotland, and to act at all times in accordance with the principles, testimony, and constitution thereof, as set forth in its Fundamental Act."

10th April.—The Rev. John Ziegler Huie, one of the founders and pioneers of this Church, having returned to the Colony, was present at this meeting of Synod. The brethren having heard an unfavourable report in regard to Mr. Huie's family relations, and, after inquiry, having been satisfied as to his integrity, received him to labour as a minister within the bounds of the Synod, and his name was added to the roll of members.

The Rev. A. M'Intyre had been relieved from his charge of the Gaelic congregation, Geelong, and Mr. Huie was appointed to officiate in his stead, until next meeting of Synod.

20th August.—A call to the Rev. J. Z. Huie, signed by one hundred and fifty-two residents in Geelong and neighbourhood, was laid on the table.

Rev. A. M'Intyre, late of Geelong, being present, intimated that, since resigning his temporary connection with the Gaelic congregation, he had been labouring within the bounds, chiefly at Ascot. He had a congregation of about 300 people, who steadily adhered

to the principles of the Free Church of Victoria. It was understood that Mr. M'Intyre's connection with the Synod continued.

21st August.—Mr. Huie accepted the call to a settlement in Geelong, and his induction took place on the 18th September ensuing.

At this meeting of Synod there were laid on the table letters from Rev. W. Miller, from which it appeared that a good prospect opened up of obtaining the services of additional ministers, and they gave thanks to the Great Head of the Church for the large measure of success with which Mr. Miller's labours in Scotland had been crowned. A numerous body of sympathisers had rallied round him. A considerable number of Presbyterians had overtured the Assembly in his interest, and able advocates had pleaded his cause in the Supreme Court of the Church.

In spite of all, the opposition in the Assembly to the position and pretensions of the Colonial Free Church was most formidable. The speeches of the leading men, especially of the Rev. Dr. Cunningham, were absolutely crushing to the cause of the minority Synod in Victoria. The merits of the basis of the United Body, the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, were discussed in one of the most brilliant ecclesiastical debates of modern times, and the Articles of Union were thoroughly vindicated as sound, scriptural, and in perfect harmony with the principles and Constitution of the Free Church of Scotland. The vote at the close was overwhelming, being 341 against 64.

After due deliberation on the emphatic decision of the Scottish Assembly, the Free Colonial Synod gave vent to their bitter disappointment in a series of declarations :—

"That the Presbyterian Church of Victoria is held by the Assembly's finding as occupying a faithful position in respect of Free Church testimony, notwithstanding the obliteration, from their basis of Union, of the testimony to those principles uplifted in 1846 by this Synod—while, on the other hand, this Synod is held as having forfeited its position, notwithstanding the continued maintenance by the Synod of the principles and testimony by which it has been distinguished from its foundation ;

"That the decision of the Assembly is unjust as between the parties in Victoria—that it falls short of what fidelity to the scripture doctrine of Christ's Headship demands in the circumstances, and is undeserving of any deference from this Synod ;

"That no Act of a particular Assembly inevitably determines the mind of the Free Church of Scotland, this Synod therefore does not feel it necessary to give forth any further deliverance on the subject."

3rd December.—The Synod welcomed Rev. Mr. Murdoch, probationer, who had recently arrived from Scotland, and had resolved to cast in his lot with them.

At this meeting, at the desire of Rev. A. M'Vean, and of a deputation, consisting of Messrs. Duncan, Moffat, and James Gibson, from the Pentridge congregation, the connection between

Brunswick and Pentridge congregations was dissolved. The deputation, as instructed by the congregation, prayed that Pentridge might be constituted a separate charge, and that steps might be taken for giving the people an opportunity to call a minister, and secure his permanent settlement. At the same time, the Brunswick congregation was made an independent charge, with Rev. A. M'Vean as minister.

It appeared that a series of resolutions had been passed at a congregational meeting, held on the 13th day of November, in St. Andrew's Church, praying the Synod to take the necessary steps for moderating in a call to the Rev. Walter M'Gillivray, D.D., at present ministering in Aberdeen, Scotland.

At a subsequent meeting Mr. Murdoch produced a certificate of license from the Free Church Presbytery of Paisley, Scotland, and a letter from Rev. W. Miller, delegate at Home, accepting him as a fellow-labourer in Victoria.

Arrangements were made as to making up the communicants' roll, and serving the edict at Pentridge.

The 17th December was appointed as the day for the Synod, or their Commission, to meet in St. Andrew's Church, at 7 p. m., when the congregation should have the opportunity of calling a minister.

16th December.—Mr. Murdoch received a unanimous call from the Pentridge congregation. He accepted the call on the following week, and was ordained on 23rd January, 1862.

Rev. John Z. Huie sent a letter to the Moderator, resigning his connection with the Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria. The resignation was at once accepted, and his name was dropped from the roll of the ministry.

23rd December.—It was reported that the call from St. Andrew's congregation issued in favour of Rev. Dr. M'Gillivray, Aberdeen. Messrs. James Robertson, Kenneth, Gunn, John Gordon, and Alexander M'Lean spoke in support of the call. The Synod agreed to transmit the call by the first opportunity. The call, however, did not result in acceptance.

7th January, 1862.—Rev. R. Fleming, Meredith, was declared to be no longer a member or minister of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria. At this date the roll of members of Synod stood as follows:—W. Miller, A. M'Vean, A. Paul, A. Maxwell, A. W. Sinclair, A. M'Intyre, ministers; W. M. Bell, R. M'Leod, J. Thomson, J. Munro, elders.

4th February.—Two brethren, who recently arrived from Scotland, appeared in Court, and presented their testimonials. The Rev. W. Dron presented his Presbyterial certificate, dated 30th October, 1861, from the Free Presbytery of Greenock, signed by James Stark, P.C. He also presented a certificate from Rev. John Gillison, Strathblane, the last sphere of labour in which he was engaged. It was certified that he left the locality in the full exercise of his ministerial functions. He was cordially received into connection with the Synod.

Rev. John Gardiner also produced his certificate of transfer

from the Presbytery of Paisley, signed by Alexander R. Findlay, P.C. Mr. Gardiner was received into the Synod as a preacher, and his name was put on the list of probationers. Mr. Dron was appointed to Geelong, and Mr. Gardiner to St. Andrew's.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SYNOD.—1859-1862.

April, 1859.—The United Presbyterian Church, strictly so called, now appears somewhat shorn in her proportions. She sustains, however, her continuity in accordance with her constitutional character. She enters on a fresh career of existence, in some measure isolated and overshadowed by her big neighbour, the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. She is in danger of being ignored or reproached for her separation, as if there was no conscience in the matter. And, in reflecting on the past, it need not be a matter of surprise, while the Denominations that entered the Union made so much of their peculiar distinctions, that the United Presbyterians should have also made something of theirs. It may be admitted, indeed, that all of them magnified their different shibboleths more than was necessary or proper, and that far too much was imported into the new Australian clime of the subtle differences and keen controversies of the old Scottish soil. And, on the other hand, it might have redounded quite as much to the honour of the separate brethren of the United Presbyterian Church had they risen above their sensitive feelings and entered the recent Union instead of standing aloof. It certainly would have contributed more to their usefulness, their personal comfort, and the prosperity of their congregations. It would, indeed, be difficult to determine which course of action was the more secularising, whether uniting with brethren who were receiving Government-grants, which were soon to be abolished, or waging incessant political warfare by public meetings, deputations, petitions, pamphlets, and leagues for the purpose of securing the cessation of State-aid. These brethren, however, made their choice and behoved to abide the consequences.

It would certainly have been much more pleasant to record the perfect Presbyterian unity of the consummated amalgamation than to be obliged to trace the history of a threefold Presbyterianism in the Colony after the Union just as before. It was so far well that the constitutional party of the United Presbyterian Church remaining outside the Union resolved on offering no vexatious opposition by suits at law for the retention of property which, although in the possession of those friends who were disposed to join the general Body, yet rightfully belonged to this Church which they left. They treated the matter philosophically, because they were persuaded it was only a question of time when they should all be one.

The first important act of the Melbourne Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church in their isolated position was a pleasing one, and seemed to indicate that, under the grace of the Great Head of the Church, their days of useful service were not ended. The Geelong congregation had been vacant from November, 1857. It

proved a very hard matter to move the Synod in Scotland to send out preachers, and there were a number of vacant charges which it seemed next to impossible to fill. During 1858 Rev. A. M. Ramsay, who paid a visit to Scotland, and who returned in February, 1859, found it a difficult thing to induce a sufficient number of suitable ministers to emigrate. The Rev. James Henderson, of Duntocher, after full and serious deliberation, resolved to resign his charge and emigrate with the prospect of undertaking the pastoral oversight of Ryrie-street Church, Geelong. He presented to the Presbytery satisfactory testimonials of his full ministerial standing. He was duly called by the congregation, and the Presbytery met at Geelong on the 17th May, 1859, and inducted him into his charge.

Mr. Henderson continued to minister acceptably to the congregation till May, 1866.

The Rev. Robert Thomson Walker, from Dunfermline, arrived about the same time as Mr. Henderson. The position of Mr. Walker, however, was somewhat peculiar. He did not immediately cast in his lot with the constitutional outstanding Presbytery. His sympathies were entirely with them. But he was only a recent arrival, and he required a little leisure to look around him, and come to a deliberate judgment as to the course he should pursue. Moreover, he stood in the relation of a minister called by commission to a particular congregation. At the time he arrived, shortly before the Union, he was only on his way to join the people of his charge in Ballaarat. It was proper he should take no decided step in forming any Presbyterial connection till he had an opportunity of taking counsel and acting in concert with his people. The United Presbyterian friends in the western metropolis had, of their own accord, laid their plans and combined their efforts for the purpose of securing the services of a minister. The leading spirits in the movement were in thorough accord with the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and equally in sympathy with her Colonial representative. One of these had been an elder in the United Presbyterian congregation of Napier-street, Collingwood. He was in constant friendly correspondence with the minister, and was glad to act under his counsel in the matter of founding a new congregation and obtaining an efficient pastoral settlement.

Absorbed with the initiatory difficulties incident to the formation of a new cause, and not having been officially organised as a congregation, it required time to elapse before they could be in a position to decide on formally entering into ecclesiastical Union with the United Presbyterian Church. Meanwhile, it was understood to be a foregone conclusion.

November, 1860.—The Rev. William Duncan, from the Newcastle Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church in England, appeared, and expressed his desire to be admitted into ministerial connection with this Church. Credentials were presented, consisting of extracts from the minutes of the Presbytery of Newcastle, England, which certified to Mr. Duncan being an ordained minister, and expressed confidence in his ability and character as a preacher of the gospel.

A document was also furnished from Rev. James Pringle, a member of Newcastle Presbytery, testifying to the excellent Christian character and ministerial qualifications of Mr. Duncan. The Presbytery expressed their entire satisfaction with these testimonials, and, according to rule, they were required to lie on the table till a subsequent meeting.

January, 1861.—Mr Duncan's application was sustained, and he was admitted to a seat in the Presbytery as a minister acting under their jurisdiction. This practice of admitting duly qualified ministers to membership of Presbytery, previously to their settlement over a congregation, was in vogue among the Presbyterian Churches in the Colony in the early days. It was felt to be desirable for the sake of united counsel and wisdom, when ministers were few in number, to give newly received preachers a seat in Court, so long as they were engaged in the active service of the Church, under the authority of the Presbytery. In the course of this year, it was unanimously agreed—"That the deed of Synod in relation to this matter of date, 1850, be rescinded, and that the Synod fall back on the usage of the Church.

Under Presbyterial sanction, Mr. Duncan directed his attention to the Upper Plenty as a sphere of ministerial labour. Accordingly he commenced public service in Whittlesea in the beginning of March. Here he continued to labour for about three months, preaching regularly at two stations every Sabbath, and visiting the families of the district during the week. The prospect, however, of his being able to form a self-sustaining congregation was not very encouraging, and he recommended the Presbytery to transfer his services to some more promising field. After the termination of his labours at the end of May in the Plenty district, and inquiries had been made for a new sphere, his labours were transferred to Ballaarat. After various attempts were made to form a congregation at Ballaarat East, then at Black Hill, he was advised to make trial at Soldiers' Hill. At the last place, in Neil-street, a site was secured on which might be erected both a Church and a manse. The prospects at this locality were highly encouraging. Mr. Duncan continued to labour here till 8th September, 1863, when he demitted his pastoral charge. On 17th November, while the resignation was not disposed of, it was made to appear that he had applied to be received into the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and that he had been received accordingly ; whereupon the Presbytery declared Mr. Duncan as having *ipso facto* ceased to be a member of this Presbytery.

In 1860, the attention of the Presbytery was called to the isolated position both of Rev. R. T. Walker, Ballaarat, and of Rev. David Chapman, Broadmeadows, and to the necessity of taking steps to secure more intimate relations to these brethren. They were both known to be identified with them in principle, and why should they not be united in Presbyterial connection? The former, since his arrival the year before, has now had time to become settled in his pastorate, and may be supposed to be in a position, along with his

congregation, to decide upon the Presbyterial relation which they can consistently sustain. It was agreed to open friendly communication with these brethren.

February, 1861.—The matter was brought before the Session at Ballaarat, and the following resolutions were agreed to :—

1. "That a Union with those Churches who hold the Standards of the United Presbyterian Church under present circumstances is very desirable."

2. "The Session agree to find that if the Union sought by the Melbourne Presbytery can be consummated without any sacrifice of principle, they agree unanimously to recommend such Union to the favourable consideration of the congregation."

3. "That the congregation may have an opportunity of considering and deciding on the question, the Session agree that a congregational meeting be held on 15th February, 1861."

March.—The decision of the Ballaarat congregation was communicated, to the effect "That a closer Union with the Melbourne Presbytery holding the Standards of the United Presbyterian Church is desirable, and that, having made all requisite preliminary inquiries, the Session are requested to take the proper steps to have such Union consummated without delay. The congregation also appointed Mr. John Hunter (elder) to appear at the next meeting of Presbytery along with Rev. R. T. Walker in prosecution of their resolution."

In accordance with these resolutions, Rev. R. T. Walker, the pastor, appeared, and stated that he and Mr. Hunter had been deputed by the Ballaarat congregation to attend this meeting of the Court, in pursuance of their desire, to be taken into ecclesiastical connection with the Melbourne Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church. Prayer was offered by Rev. A. M. Ramsay, senior member of Presbytery, at the call of the Moderator, offering thanks to the Great Head of the Church for this encouraging token of His favour. The right hand of fellowship was given to Mr. Walker, and his name was added to the roll.

Mr. Walker continued to labour in Ballaarat with great acceptance and success. A handsome and substantial place of worship was in a short time erected in Armstrong-street. A commodious and excellent manse was also erected in Drummond-street. A numerous and influential congregation was formed. The membership within a few years rose to about one hundred and fifty in communion. Mr. Walker's pulpit ministrations were of a high order, both as to doctrinal illustration, practical enforcement, and earnest delivery. His views were thoroughly evangelical. In the old country, both in Comrie and in Dunfermline, about the time of the Morrisonian controversy, on the subject of the extent of the atonement, he was a leader on the side of views, which resiled from the extreme Calvinism that had long prevailed, and were in favour of giving prominence to the liberal aspect of Divine truth concerning the way of salvation. Moreover his ripe scholarship, his large experience, his singular skill in the management of Church business, based on

his clear and extensive knowledge of legal forms, all gave him a high ascendency as a member of Court. His word in cases of doubt or difficulty always carried weight as to the right course of procedure. When he occupied the Moderator's chair in the General Assembly of 1875, his skill and patience were severely taxed by very difficult cases which came before the Court. But his firmness, his good judgment, and his tact won for him general admiration. Indeed, his dignified bearing, added to his superior attainments as a theologian, and his great ability in clearly and readily expressing his views, could not but strike the brethren as all specially fitting him to occupy a professor's chair.

In the all-wise Providence of God, however, circumstances did not permit Mr. Walker rising to the higher eminence for which he seemed to be so well qualified. The picture requires rather to be reversed. After labouring with so much ability and success, serious misunderstandings and complications made their appearance in the congregation in June, 1867. The Presbytery's interference was invoked. It was found on inquiry that, from various causes, none of which involved personal character, separation between pastor and people became a necessity. A large number, however, of the congregation and office-bearers thoroughly sympathised with Mr. Walker. The proportion between those for and those against separation was nine to five. After much effort on the part of the Presbytery to effect reconciliation to no purpose, both parties professing sincere attachment to the United Presbyterian Church, it was arranged that there should be a separation of the one party from the other. It devolved on the Presbytery to assist the two parties in coming to an equitable distribution of property and a fair share of responsibilities. The major party would retain the Church property, and the other would retain occupation of the manse and grounds, and would provide a place of worship for themselves.

After no ordinary toil and difficulty, the separation and whole arrangements as to properties and their burdens were completed to the satisfaction of both parties. The Armstrong-street congregation was, by Presbyterial appointment, declared vacant on the first Sabbath of September. On the other hand, Rev. Mr. Walker and his following secured a place of worship in Doveton-street, which was purchased from another denomination. Mr. Walker continued to occupy this position, till at length a crisis occurred in the history of the Ebenezer Church section of his original congregation. The major part of the Church, from which he had separated, do not seem to have prospered under the new arrangement.

They decided on taking an extraordinary step immediately consequent on the separation. They resolved, without assigning any reason, on rescinding the congregational resolution under which they had entered into Union with the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The ostensible reason of the remarkable escapade was the opposition and remonstrance of the Church Court against their admitting to the pulpit, and persisting in entering into prolonged engagement with a minister of another denomination, without

observing the Presbyterian rules in securing a pastoral settlement They would set at defiance the order of Church procedure, and be an independent authority to themselves. They would tie or untie their connection with the denomination without scruple, as if consistency, principle, and loyalty to Christ's rule were matters of small moment.

The saddest part of the business was that the minister whom they were determined to employ had only one week previously been compelled to resign connection with his congregation, in the most summary manner, because of a public report. He seemed to confess his fault in the affair, by at once submitting to an abrupt separation, without challenging investigation or submitting to discipline. His ministrations continued for a few years in Ballaarat, but the pecuniary burdens of the congregation were not becoming less, rather the reverse ; and the minister having fallen into bad health, a separation became inevitable. Another minister was secured, whose services extended over a few years, but matters still failed to prosper, and he was under the necessity of retiring. Having found no benefit from their isolation, their independency, and their disregard of pulpit influence, they at length applied for admission, as an isolated congregation, into the Presbyterian Church of Victoria on 9th November, 1870, and, after some discussion, were received. This occurred at the same meeting of the Assembly at which—and immediately after—the Union had been effected between the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and the United Presbyterian Church.

On the other hand, Mr. Walker was able to hold his ground, although his congregation could not boast of any great prosperity. In 1875-6 he was honoured by the General Assembly calling him to occupy the Moderator's chair. Soon after this, when the second vacancy occurred in Ebenezer, an amicable arrangement was entered into, whereby the two separated parties again became one, and Mr. Walker was restored to his old pulpit. He persevered for a number of years, discharging his duties with faithfulness, till the infirmities of age rendered it necessary he should resign the active work of the ministry. Accordingly he arranged with the congregation to have an assistant and successor, while he continued to officiate in vacant pulpits, in visiting the hospital, and in doing other useful work. The Presbytery appointed him to be Moderator of Kirk Session in St. Andrew's, upon the decease of the minister—Rev. W. Henderson, in August, 1885. His year of jubilee, as an ordained minister, occurred in 1886, when his friends united their efforts and made him a present of about £200. Mr. Walker is the oldest minister by ordination in the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

March, 1862.—The Rev. D. Chapman, formerly in connection with this Synod, but who had been occupying an isolated position for several years, responded to the Presbytery's communication respecting the propriety of more intimate relations. He made inquiry as to the basis of ecclesiastical fellowship, wishing to know specially whether the Standards and Forms of the Home Church had been adopted. Full information was imparted.

May.—The next communication from Rev. Mr. Chapman

declared that he had brought the subject of re-union before the congregation, and having given them all needful information, the idea of a closer connection was favourably entertained, and that they had passed a resolution to cast in their lot with them. The members of Presbytery agreed to record the satisfaction which they unanimously felt that Mr. Chapman and his congregation should have seen it to be their duty to return to their connection with this Church, and agreed to recognise them as in full communion with the Synod. Mr. Chapman's name was added to the roll of the ministry, and the congregation of Broadmeadows was received under the jurisdiction of the Courts of the Church.

June.—The Rev. W. Ridley, of Portland, applied for letters of demission and disjunction with a view to his return to Sydney, New South Wales. It was with extreme regret the Presbytery agreed to his request. Every effort was made at once by his congregation and by the Presbytery to retain his services to the Church, but without success. Family considerations seemed to render his removal imperative.

July.—Mr. Peter M'Cracken appeared as the certified representative elder of the Broadmeadows congregation, and along with Rev. D. Chapman, his minister, he took his seat as a member of Presbytery.

A report from Rev. Messrs. Walker and Duncan was laid on the table to the effect that various steps had been taken with the view of forming a congregation on Soldiers' Hill. Nine individuals had been received into the fellowship of the Church, attendance on ordinances was increasing, and the prospects of the initiated cause were improving. It was agreed to declare the worshippers on Soldiers' Hill a congregation in connection with this Presbytery.

CHAPTER III.

1862–1866.

SYNOD OF THE FREE CHURCH OF VICTORIA.

The Free Church has had five years' experience of their separate and independent action. Their course has not been altogether smooth sailing. Their disjunction from the main Body, and especially the manner in which their removal had been effected, aroused no small amount of painful and antagonistic feeling. The consequence was, on the part of the separatists, a firm determination to claim all the rights and privileges which it was in their power to do. They stood on as good a footing, they considered, as the larger Body. They maintained that their expulsion was effected in an arbitrary and oppressive manner, and contrary to the established rules of discipline. If they had committed offence, let them be tried by a regular form of process. But they were summarily driven from the communion of the Church without an opportunity of defending themselves in the usual way against formulated charges. Moreover, it came to be understood, that the action of the majority was not altogether approved by the parent Church in Scotland. They had laboured hard to maintain their cause by deputy before the General Assembly of the Free Church in Edinburgh, and had signally failed. They had been contending energetically in the Colony with the major Free Church, now amalgamated with other Presbyterian denominations, in order not only to retain as much Church property as possible, but as large a share as they could obtain of the Government grants for stipends and for buildings. In the struggle between parties, the Government were under the necessity of suspending payments, till the contending parties could, among themselves, adjust their claims. But we must allow their proceedings in detail to speak for themselves.

We shall give a summary of events in the order of their occurrence.

March, 1862.—The minority obtained, as the result of financial arrangements with the majority, a stipend portion for four ministers.

Rev. W. Miller, having returned from his unsuccessful visit to the fatherland, maintained his consistency by still refusing to partake of the aid of the State.

Rev. John Gardiner gave supply at St. Andrew's, Carlton, and Rev. W. Dron at Geelong.

The Synod, amid all their local distractions, were able to cast a sympathising glance at the British throne. The Queen had become a widow, and they transmitted an address to Her Majesty, expressive of their sympathy in her bereavement through the death of the Prince Consort.

Their sympathies also went forth towards a bereavement in Edinburgh. They agreed to prepare a minute on the occasion of the death of Principal Cunningham, of the Free Church, expressive of their high appreciation of his worth.

Mr. M'Pherson continued to supply at Meredith.

April.—It was found that the Church property at Meredith and Lethbridge was claimed by the United Body.

May.—The Synod found themselves liable to the amount of £285 in connection with the deputation to Scotland.

It was deemed proper to take legal steps to recover the possession of the Meredith and Lethbridge property.

The congregation at Bellarine was in difficulties, and craved for help.

June.—The Rev. Dr. M'Gillivray, of Aberdeen, Scotland, declined the call from St. Andrew's, Carlton. At the same time, the Doctor inquired for information as to the relations between the Free Church minority to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. They agreed to state, in reply, that Union to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria was in existing circumstances highly undesirable.

Another Church property at Beckwith was disputed.

A call issued from Meredith and Lethbridge in favour of Mr. Peter M'Pherson. After a little consideration he accepted the call, and his ordination was effected on the 18th.

The Rev. W. Dron tendered his resignation as a minister in connection with the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

August.—The Synod having discovered that Rev. A. Begg had been supplying at St. Andrew's without their authority, he being a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, declared this to be unsuitable.

Rev. W. Miller applied to the Presbytery, on behalf of the managers and congregation of John Knox Church, for leave to meet for service in St. Andrew's, because they had the prospect of pulling down the old place of worship and building it anew. He obtained the liberty sought.

October.—The law suit in regard to Meredith and Lethbridge has terminated "by judgment being taken by consent against the parties (Presbyterian Church) who had taken occupation."

Rev. A. Gardiner had gone to St. Andrew's to preach, according to appointment, but was prevented by a few of the members of the Board of Management, who assigned certain prudential reasons for preferring the services of the Rev. A. Begg.

A deputation from St. Andrew's congregation stated that they wished the Synod to authorise a meeting of the congregation, with a view to their calling a minister from Scotland, and meanwhile they would find their own supply. The Synod declined taking any action in the case unless the former conduct of the managers were satisfactorily explained.

The Moderator was authorised to concur in the sale of whatever portion of John Knox Church property it might be found necessary to dispose of, in the prospect of re-building the Church.

It was agreed that the Presbytery should meet at intervals of two months, on the first Tuesday of the month, and that the Synod should meet twice in the year, on the third Tuesday of April and on the same day of October.

1863.—The April Synod met at St. Kilda, John Knox Church having been pulled down.

The subject of the Widows' Fund was brought under consideration, the question being whether it should be continued.

It was proposed that the Widows' Fund should terminate, that congregations be recommended to insure the lives of their ministers for not less than £500; that the policy of such insurance should belong to the minister; that if required the minister should pay towards the premium £5 per annum; and that the amount now in hand should be given to Mrs. M'Dougall as a final settlement with her.

It was agreed to lift up their testimony in favour of the due observance of the Lord's Day, and against prevailing forms of Sabbath desecration.

October.—Correspondence had been carried on with Government on the subject of Church property, in the form of sites, and the result was that those of St. Kilda, Broadford, and Meredith had been permanently reserved, while the name of Rev. P. M'Pherson had been substituted for that of Rev. R. Fleming.

A motion standing in the name of Rev. Mr. Maxwell, in reference to Union with other denominations, was considered. The motion looked in the direction of "uniting with the larger body so soon as a satisfactory basis could be agreed on;" and he asserted it to be the duty of the Church to promote the adoption of such a basis. This was seconded by Mr. Murdoch.

An amendment was proposed by Mr. W. M. Bell, and seconded by Mr. Miller—"That this Church has always been favourable to Union with other Presbyterians on proper terms, but that it would be unwise in present circumstances to seek Union with others at the expense of dis-union among themselves."

A second amendment was proposed by Rev. A. Paul, and seconded by Mr. Munro—"That this Church, on no grounds of consistency, agree to unite with a Church, or the representatives of a Church, which, like the Church of Scotland, had yielded voluntary servility to the supreme power of the State, or with another Church which, while professing voluntaryism, has never in public authoritative Standards defined what the system is."

The result was rather curious, as might have been expected among so small a number of voters with so many appeals to their judgment. Each amendment in turn, and the motion as well, was rejected by the smallest majority. They were not in a mood for Union.

April, 1864.—A communication on the subject of Union was received from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. This called for a fresh discussion of the important topic of Union. The result was a resolution, which was adopted by a majority—"That it be an instruction to the Committee to provide that this Church does not

enter into terms of Union unless the Westminster Confession of Faith be received *simpliciter;* that no proposal for Union be entertained which does not exclude the Civil Magistrate from interference in things purely ecclesiastical and does not exclude from communion any Church which does."

An amendment was proposed by Rev. A. Paul, to the effect—"That the Moderator refer the Union Committee of the Presbyterian Church to the answer forwarded to Mr. Hetherington in regard to a similar proposal on 19th November, 1860." The motion was carried by a majority of six to five.

The claims put forth on the Government building fund were—Rev. A. M'Vean, £500 towards the building of a new Church; Rev. A. Maxwell, £60 for improving the manse at Kilmore; Rev. Mr. Gardiner, £60, on behalf of the cause at Connewarre; and Mr. J. Thomson, £60, on behalf of St. Kilda Church.

May.—In consequence of a disagreement between Rev. A. Paul and Rev. Messrs. Maxwell and M'Vean, in connection with the decision of the Synod on Union, a disruption was the result. Rev. P. M'Pherson and Rev. A. M'Intyre, sympathising with Mr. Paul, abruptly left the Court, and Mr. Joseph Thomson (elder) went along with them.

October.—A *pro re nata* meeting of Synod was held to consider certain sealed communications which were in the hands of the Moderator, and which required immediate attention. These were found to refer to particular acts and proceedings of Rev. Messrs. A. Paul, P. M'Pherson, and A. M'Intyre, and Mr. Joseph Thomson (elder), and to deliberate on the steps necessary to be taken by this Synod in consequence thereof. The Synod were much embarrassed and grieved at the aspect which matters assumed.

Indeed, at this stage, it appeared as if blow after blow would fall on the brethren with crushing severity. Having taken a decided stand against a general Union, it appeared as if they would become a prey to destructive divisions among themselves and to various adverse occurrences.

November.—An intimation from their courageous leader and champion fell on them like a thunderbolt. Rev. W. Miller announced his intention to resign his charge of John Knox congregation and his connection with the Synod, with the view of returning to Scotland. The grounds of this ominous decision were the state of his wife's health and the opinion of three medical advisers that she ought to be removed to a cooler climate as soon as she was sufficiently recovered from present sickness to admit of change.

A second blow of a similar kind seemed to fall forthwith upon them. Rev. A. W. Sinclair having intimated his resolution to resign on the ground of his family's health, and the people not opposing the step, he was released from his charge.

In the midst of these painful changes, it appeared that a serious disruption had occurred among the brethren. Small and weak though they had been, they became smaller, and of course weaker, by a fresh division. The demon of dis-union seemed to

triumph. The brethren who had formed the Free Church minority of protesters against the general Union fell into a painful misunderstanding one with another, and could not meet together in ministerial fellowship. Efforts were made to restore harmony, but they were in vain. The result was that the little Synod became divided into two smaller Synods. The new off-shoot embraced Rev. Messrs. A. Paul, P. M'Pherson, A. M'Intyre, and Mr. J. Thompson, elder. The elder Synod, claiming the supreme authority, sat in judgment on the seceding brethren, and declared them to be followers of divisive courses, therefore no longer ministers or members of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

At the same time the Synod, in a charitable spirit, agreed to respect the equitable interest of the separated brethren in the Government-grant, and to declare their willingness to receive the disaffected brethren back into fellowship upon their submitting to the Synod's jurisdiction.

At length, in the depth of their sorrows, on account of the evils of separation and division, the Synod bethought themselves in reference to the blessings and privileges of Union. Separation is weakness, amalgamation is strength. They resolved, therefore, to consider the reply which they ought to give to the communication received from the Committee on Union of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, of which Rev. A. D. Kininmont was Convener. The most striking thing of all was that they should open correspondence with the voluntary United Presbyterians in order to discover a basis of Union with them. Nor was it a passing thought merely, the Synod took action in the case. What a blessing when affliction brings wisdom !

The result of the Synod's deliberations was the proposal of an actual basis of Union, to which the outstanding Presbyterians in the Colony might all consistently agree. The following was the projected basis, which was forwarded to the other two denominations :—

1. "That the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Form of Presbyterian Church Government, the Directory for Public Worship, and the Second Book of Discipline be the subordinate Standards of this Church.

2. "That, in regard to the doctrine contained in the Standards relative to the professing or countenancing of any views in reference to the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion, the office-bearers of this Church in subscribing these Standards are not to be held as professing or countenancing any views in reference to the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate inconsistent with liberty of conscience.

3. "That the Church asserts for itself a jurisdiction independent of all other Churches, and within its own sphere independent of all civil authority, and that it is responsible only to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Supreme Head of the Church."

December.—It was reported at the meeting of the Synod that the basis of Union which they had drawn out was not accepted

by the Commission of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and that the United Presbyterians had not sent reply. This was a double discouragement. The Synod were evidently adjudged by their brethren of the other denominations not to be adepts in the formation of a common bond of Union. To all their afflictions, they seemed to feel, this was the heaviest stroke of the rod. They found the staff on which they leaned as their last hope of deliverance to be, to appearance, a broken reed. Accordingly, the Committee wished the Synod to relieve them of further duty in regard to seeking Union with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The Synod discharged the Committee from further duty in reference to the large Body, but appointed them to continue correspondence with the small section of United Presbyterians. They were reluctant to abandon all hope of Union, however feeble and few might be the rays of light that fell upon them.

January, 1865.—In regard to the resignation of Rev. W. Miller, the brethren expressed their high esteem for his personal character, and their sense of the many important services he had rendered to this Church and to the cause of Christianity in the Colony. On various grounds they felt shut up to the necessity, though with great regret, to acquiesce in the course taken by their brother. Therefore, the Synod accept the resignation of Mr. Miller and dissolve the pastoral tie between him and the John Knox congregation, earnestly recommending their highly-esteemed and greatly-beloved brother to the communion and confidence of any section of the Christian Church where Divine providence might place his future lot.

In the midst of the surrounding gloom a little ray of encouragement seemed at length to reach them. The Committee on Union had received a communication from Rev. A. M. Ramsay, on behalf of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church, stating that the basis proposed by this Synod would be acceptable to the United Presbyterian brethren, but the great obstacle to an incorporated Union was the reception of Government-aid, and inquiring whether any steps could be taken to remove the barrier. The Synod, after long and earnest consideration, unanimously agreed—"To record their high satisfaction at finding that the views of the United Presbyterian Synod were in such entire accordance with their own principles, and that the only barrier to Union is one which seems to the brethren of this Church to be one which admits of an arrangement which may be satisfactory to both parties, and with a view of promoting the end proposed, they instructed their Committee on Union to seek a Conference with the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church to ascertain how the only existing obstacle to Union may be removed."

June.—Calamity follows calamity. Rev. A. Maxwell had been laid aside from pastoral work at Kilmore, and on 20th May he departed this life.

The congregation of John Knox Church, at a meeting held on the 12th, agreed to give a call to Rev. William Nicholson, D.D., of Hobart Town, to be their minister. The call was signed by ninety-

six communicants and sixty-one adherents. The invitation was not accepted.

Rev. A. Paul claimed, on behalf of the dissentient party, three-fifths of the Government-grant in aid of their share. The Rev. A. M'Vean claimed for his party a *pro rata* distribution of four to three, and the opposing parties require to agree before the Government would give to any.

August.—Mr. W. M. Bell, the elder representing John Knox congregation, made a serious announcement. He had doubts as to his right to occupy a seat in the Synod, in consequence of a resolution passed by the John Knox congregation on the 25th July. The resolution adopted was—"That as it is absolutely necessary, in consequence of the late disruption in the Free Church, that the congregation now declare to which of the branches of the said Church they shall belong, they do now resolve and hereby declare their attachment to the Synod of which the Rev. A. Paul is Moderator."

The Synod agreed to sanction Mr. Bell's retaining his seat meanwhile, as an associated member in the Church Courts, in consideration of the many important services he had rendered to the Church, and at the same time to throw no obstacle in the way of the congregation carrying out their resolution.

October.—The congregation of Kilmore agreed to call Rev. J. Donald Meiklejohn, Free Church minister at Dunedin, New Zealand. The call was signed by forty-four members and thirty-one adherents.

February, 1866.—The Rev. J. Donald Meiklejohn was inducted into the pastoral charge at Kilmore on 6th February.

Rev. John M'Lean applied, by letter, for admission into the ministry of this Church. A Committee was appointed to confer with him, and, if thought expedient, to employ him in some sphere of labour.

A proposal from Rev. A. Paul was considered in regard to a division of Church property and the administration of the "grant-in-aid." The Synod resolved that they could not interfere with the Trustees of property, but they would be happy to agree to any arrangement on equitable terms in regard to the State-grant.

April.—The roll of Synod now embraced Rev. Messrs. M'Vean, Meiklejohn, and Gardiner; and Messrs. Bell, M'Leod, and Munro, elders.

A Committee on Union was appointed after the death of Mr. Maxwell, the Convener of the former Committee. The Rev. Messrs. Meiklejohn and M'Vean, and Messrs. Munro and M'Leod were appointed the new Union Committee.

The cause of contention in regard to the State-money was settled with Rev. A. Paul and his party by the acceptance of one-half of the grant.

November.—In regard to Union, it was reported that Rev. J. O. Dykes had prepared a Declaratory Act with a view to facilitate their Union with the general Body. The Act referred to had received the attentive consideration and the cordial approbation of

the Committee on Union. Moreover, it had been submitted to th Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and adopted by them. The Committee on Union of this Church fully concurred in all the steps that had been taken, and the Synod approved.

The Declaratory Act was simply a satisfactory explanation of four different categorical points in the basis of Union. 1. "What was meant by the difference of opinion in regard to the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate? Article II." 2. "What was meant by personal conscience and the right of private judgment? Article II." 3. "What was meant by the Assembly or Synod having supreme jurisdiction over its subordinate judicatories, congregations, and people? Article III." 4. "What was meant by receiving all ministers and preachers from other Presbyterian Churches applying for admission on an equal footing?"

The answers to these queries were accepted and were embodied in the Act.

The Synod were satisfied with the Act as a basis of Union, and agreed to use means to secure the intelligent assent of all the congregations. A Committee was appointed to take the steps necessary in order to carry into effect the contemplated Union.

An additional affliction was to be endured in the hour of joy and of expected triumph. Mr. W. M. Bell was confined by dangerous sickness.

Besides this, Rev. J. Gardiner asked leave of absence for eight months to visit Scotland, in order to the recruiting of his health.

In the midst of all discouragements it was so far cheering that the way of Union was clear, and the Synod recorded a hearty vote of thanks to the Rev. J. O. Dykes for his important service to the Church.

How strangely events unfold themselves! How frequently the unexpected happens! But a little while and the prospect of Union was all in the direction of the United Presbyterians, while the hope of Union with the general Body was of the faintest kind. Now the reverse is the case.

May, 1867.—Another encouragement follows. A special circular, calling a meeting of Synod, was issued. The business was to consider a request from the John Knox congregation to moderate in a call. It was found that the elders had withdrawn their resignation and resumed their office. The tie to the Synod so abruptly broken was now cemented. In proof of restored attachment, Mr. W. M. Bell was elected to the office of representative of the Session in the Church Court. The Synod expressed great satisfaction at the new turn in the course of events.

Mr. Bell reported a singular and interesting experience in the pioneer congregation of the Free Church. It appeared that the property of the John Knox Church had been foreclosed through arrears of interest. The mortgagee exercised his power of sale on the property. The Rev. A. M'Vean was the purchaser, with the intention of appropriating it to the use of the congregation now adhering to the Synod, it being understood that the congregation

resuming the occupation and ownership of the property do so subject to a debt of about £2,300. Upon their undertaking the liabilities, there could be no barrier to the peaceful possession of the place of worship. They readily accepted the condition.

A call was laid on the table from the John Knox congregation in favour of Rev. J. O. Dykes, of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The call was signed by thirty-three communicants and twenty-five adherents. The call was, of course, sustained, and a Committee was appointed to wait on Mr. Dykes in order to urge his acceptance.

November.—The Committee reported that when Mr. Dykes was waited upon, and was urged to accept, he referred to the honour done to him by the call, his appreciation of that honour, and the claim it had on his earnest consideration, but his intention was to return to Scotland, and, therefore, he declined acceptance of the call.

Mr. Dykes, however, kindly consented to take charge of John Knox congregation during his stay in the Colony, and to give them all the assistance in his power in securing a settled pastor. Accordingly they took steps to obtain a minister from Home. Through his instrumentality, and that of a Committee of leading ministers and members of the Free Church in Scotland, they appealed for ministerial supply, promising a stipend of £600 per annum for two years, and the payment of travelling expenses to the Colony. Besides this, Mr. Dykes consented to the request of the congregation and Synod that he should act as Moderator of Session, and he was awarded a seat in the Synod as an associated member.

The attention of the Synod was called to the solemn announcement of Mr. W. M. Bell's decease. Deeply impressed with the loss sustained through the departure of Rev. A. Maxwell and Mr. Bell, leading men in the Church, they resolved to put on the minutes, before closing their records as a distinctive denomination, a memorial record, expressive of the Synod's deep sense of the painful privations to which they have been subjected. A summary of the minutes will be found below.*

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* The Rev. Andrew Maxwell was a native of Scotland. He was ordained to the ministry at Home, and was appointed to Armadale, New South Wales, in 1852. He was settled there in the following year, and laboured faithfully till 1856. His health failed, and he resolved to return to his native air in North Britain. He revisited Victoria, and felt quite restored by the cooler climate of the Southern Colony. He soon received a call and settlement at Kilmore. There, however, he was afflicted with long-continued sickness among his children, and even bereavement in his family. Finally his own bad health returned, and he had severe suffering for six weeks before he died. Mr. Maxwell was distinguished for meekness and dignity, his unswerving devotedness to principle, his amiable disposition, and his consistent and elevated character. He was the author of two pamphlets—one "On the Headship of Christ;" the other "A Review of Synodical Proceedings Relative to Union with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria"—in both of which he displayed a considerable amount of intellectual ability. He formed a high estimate of the blessings which should attend the Union of all the Presbyterians, and had he been spared to witness the Union about to be consummated, his heart would have rejoiced.

William Montgomery Bell arrived at a very early period in the history of

19th November, 1867.—At last the day of Union has come, and thereby deliverance from past conflicts. The final resolution came to be adopted previous to self-dissolution and extinction, to be followed by a new life in the large United Body.

The resolution recognised the obligation to seek the outward unity of the Body of Christ, referred to the fact of the Union of 1859, stating that the three fundamental Articles of Union made reference to the Declaratory Act passed by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in November, 1866—an Act which was approved by this Synod—declared the expediency of an incorporated Union with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in accordance with the fundamental Act of this Church, 7th and 8th sections, and recorded the reception of a communication from the Presbyterian General Assembly, to the effect—"That the Assembly, having heard with satisfaction the completion of all necessary preliminary arrangements towards the efforts of the proposed Union with the Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, resolve, in terms of the report now submitted by the Union Committee, to proceed to the consummation of said Union."

The Synod then, after solemn deliberation and prayer, resolved to adjourn to the Scots Church, to meet with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria now in session there, with the view of consummating the Union with that Church.

Further, this Synod resolve and declare that, so soon as the incorporation of this Synod with the aforesaid General Assembly takes place under the designation of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the existence of the Free Presbyterian Church as a separate Church shall terminate.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA—1862-1866.

The following is a summary of occurrences during the specified years of her history :—

The attention of the brethren at this date was earnestly directed to practical questions. Their great object was to train the congre-

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the Colony. He was one of the pioneer merchants who succeeded in business to a large extent. Amid his secular engagements, he devoted himself earnestly to the interests of the Free Church. He was a gentleman of eminent abilities, having been engaged in study in early life for the profession of civil law. His public spirit led him to take a lively interest in social affairs in the community. His influence as an estimable, trustworthy, and well educated man fitted him for taking a high position in civic rank. Accordingly he was elevated to the highest honours which the city could confer. He employed all his qualifications for usefulness in the service of the Church of Christ, and he held, for many years, the highest position among her members, and acted an efficient part as representative elder in the Church Courts. He took the side of the minority of Free Church brethren who were expelled on account of their opposition to the projected Union with other Presbyterian denominations. Notwithstanding this, in the recent movement towards Union with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, he gave his hearty sympathy. He died avowing his confidence in Christ, and his anticipation of the glory to be revealed.

gations to fulfil all the functions of a healthy Church, not content with caring simply for their individual interests, but seeking to extend the privileges of the gospel to others. Collections, therefore, were appointed to be made for a mission fund, with a view to planting Churches in needful districts in the Colony. Arrangements were also made for Presbyterial visits to the congregations and for exercising a wholesome supervision.

September.—The infant cause on Soldiers' Hill, Ballaarat, engrossed a good deal of attention. It stood in need of much fostering care and encouragement. The Presbytery required to put forth constant efforts for a time in order to help it forward. The wise precaution was taken to see that the property acquired should be secured to the Denomination.

There was one matter of a public kind which served to excite the interest of the brethren, and even to bring them, without any intention or fault of their own, into a sort of collision of interests with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The census of the population of the Colony had recently been taken. According to the rules of the census, it was indispensable that the returns should indicate the numbers belonging respectively to the different religious Denominations. A penalty was attached to the making of false returns. The United Presbyterian brethren naturally felt sensitive about any matter which affected the portion of the £50,000 annual grant of Government for religious purposes which legally belonged to them. Consistently with their principles, they could not accept the portion allotted to them according to their numbers fixed by the census. Hence they were in the habit of allowing their share of "the grant-in-aid" of public worship to lapse into the general revenue.

Their sensitiveness on the subject rather increased than otherwise since the Union of 1859, seeing there was no reason for their separate existence as a Denomination, if they could have entered into the Union without being involved in the responsibility of upholding, in greater or less degree, State-grants to religion instead of uncompromisingly seeking their abolition. Accordingly, an intimation was made to the Colonial Treasurer, on behalf of the Synod, that according to past practice it was the desire of the United Presbyterians that their portion of the Government-grant should lapse into the consolidated funds of the Colony.

A surprising result of the census came to light. It appeared that there was allocated by the law of the census to the United Presbyterian Church a sum of £1,763 9s. 2d. It had been alleged by the Convener of the State-aid Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria that this was an exaggerated amount for the numbers belonging to the United Presbyterian denomination—that he challenged the accuracy of the census returns—that a great many members and adherents of the large United Body must have put down their names and designations in the census returns as "United Presbyterians" in mistake, thereby swelling the amount due to the United Presbyterian section, and correspondingly diminishing the amount due to the Presbyterian Church.

It seemed, however, to be overlooked that a large number of United Presbyterians had entered the Union as avowed voluntaries, and with a determination to maintain their consistency. All these had a right to put down their names as still "United Presbyterians," because they were so in principle, and could not consistently allow their names to go to swell the amount of the State-grant which others wished to obtain. And in this broad and consistent view, it could hardly be disputed that the sum allotted by the census was not at all exaggerated. Allowing the entire Presbyterian population to be one-sixth of the whole, they would be entitled to about £8,000. And granting the voluntary Presbyterians to be one-fifth of the whole number of Presbyterians, they would be legally entitled, as voluntaries, to have something like £1,600 lapsing on their behalf into the common revenue. The Treasurer, however, affirmed that Rev. I. Hetherington claimed of the above sum £726 12s. 7d. as rightfully due to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

It mattered nothing in a sense to the United Presbyterians whether a small or a large sum were allocated to them, because they repudiated the whole, and could not consistently either accept themselves or give consent to others having their portion.

No small amount of correspondence took place among the parties concerned—the Government and the two Churches. The Government in such cases usually referred matters of dispute to be amicably arranged by the parties with one another. And until an agreement was arrived at among themselves, the Government refused to acknowledge any application for money. The United Presbyterians were precluded by the law of the case from any interference with the census returns, because these were decisive and final, and equally debarred by their principles from negotiating a fresh allocation of the allotted amount for the benefit of others. They were helpless in any attempt to deliver the other party out of the dilemma. The Government and the Presbyterian Church of Victoria had virtually the settlement of the matter in their own hands.

The result was that the Government took on themselves the responsibility of making a fresh allocation, not according to the numbers in the census returns, which the law pronounced decisive, but according to the number of ministers in the two Denominations. By this decision the Presbyterian Church of Victoria secured for practical use the amount due to all the United Presbyterian ministers who had joined the United Body—an amount which they had, by their principles, virtually stipulated at the Union should have been allowed to lapse, but which now fell to be distributed among all the ministers who appoved of State grants. In these circumstances, the United Presbyterian Church, having no personal or practical interest at stake, contented themselves with lodging a protest in the Treasury against the illegal action of the Government, contravening the 53rd clause of the Constitution Act.

November.—The Presbytery, on considering the tenure of the Church property on Soldiers' Hill, found that it was only a residence

claim. They proposed, therefore, an arrangement for raising the money and effecting the purchase within a few months. Then the property would be a freehold.

March, 1863.—The correspondence with the Government in reference to the census returns and the claims of the Presbyterian Church terminated at this date.

April.—Arrangements were made for collecting the statistics of all the congregations in the Body.

Rev. John Inglis and Rev. J. G. Paton, missionaries of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland and Canada, from the New Hebrides Islands, were introduced to the Presbytery. They were accompanied by Williamu, a converted chief from Aneityum. Rev. John Inglis gave an interesting account of his labours, and of his recent translation of the New Testament into the language of Aneityum. He had been engaged in this work in Britain during the last three years, and he had brought it to a successful termination.

Rev. J. G. Paton expressed his great pleasure in meeting with the Presbytery. He had been engaged the last sixteen months visiting the Australian Colonies, collecting funds for the purchase of a mission ship. His mission had been entirely successful, having realized the sum of £1,500. He thanked the Presbytery for the kind interest the members had taken in the mission, and the essential service they had rendered him in assisting him to attain his object.

The Presbytery expressed their great gratification at hearing the account of the important work in which these esteemed missionary brethren were engaged—the affectionate interest which they felt in the success of their labours among the heathen—and the admiration and respect which they cherished towards the missionaries for their noble and self-denying efforts in order to spread the Gospel of Christ among the perishing heathen.

September.—The Soldiers' Hill congregation did not make rapid progress, and consequently were always struggling with difficulties. In the midst of the struggles, Rev. William Duncan, the minister of the forming cause, became so discouraged as to lay on the table of Presbytery the demission of his charge.

October.—No commissioners from the congregation of Soldiers' Hill appeared to indicate the mind of the people in regard to the minister's resignation. The disposal of the demission, therefore, behoved to be delayed till next meeting. Rev. Mr. Duncan, however, intimated that he could not retain his charge of the congregation any longer, no reason being assigned for the haste to be released.

November.—It was reported, on good authority, that Rev. W. Duncan had applied for admission into the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and that he had been received. No further steps, therefore, required to be taken in considering his resignation. By his own act he had ceased to be any longer a member of the United Presbyterian Church. It was arranged to have the communion

dispensed at Soldiers' Hill, and the ministers of the Presbytery agreed to give a month's gratis supply of Sabbath service.

Rev. James Dick appeared before the Presbytery, and made application for admission into the ministry of the Church. Mr. Dick made a statement explanatory of his position, his relations to the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and the course he had pursued since his arrival in the Colony. He had held a charge in Busby, near Glasgow. He had been doing mission work since his arrival, partly within the bounds of the Castlemaine Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and partly at Woodend. His application and testimonials were allowed to lie on the table till next meeting.

February, 1864.—A more favourable report was given of the financial condition of the Soldiers' Hill congregation. It was agreed to hand over all the money in the Presbytery Treasurer's hands to the trustees, to assist in the purchase of the Neil-street site at the forthcoming sale. The pulpit had been regularly supplied.

It was intimated that a communication had been received from Rev. A. D. Kininmont on the subject of Union. Mr. Kininmont informed this Church that a Commission on Union had been appointed with a view to communication with the United Presbyterian Church and others. A Committee was accordingly appointed, consisting of Rev. A. M. Ramsay, Rev. R. Hamilton, and Rev. J. Henderson. Mr. Henderson was appointed Convener, in order to conduct any further correspondence that may be necessary on the subject of Union.

May.—The members of Presbytery continued to supply at Soldier's Hill in order to foster, as far as possible, the life of the infant cause. For some time it could be only a mission station under the care of the minister and Session of Ebenezer Church, Armstrong-street. The Presbytery counselled the people to keep up a congregational character, to meet as regularly as possible for public worship, even in the want of services conducted by an ordained minister, and to avail themselves of the pastoral supervision of the minister of the sister congregation until, in His all-wise providence, the Great Head of the Church should see meet to send a stated pastor. Meanwhile, the congregations were enjoined to forward to the Treasurer all the moneys collected to aid the congregation in securing their site by purchase.

The Convener of the Union Committee reported that they had met twice with the Committee of the Presbyterian Church; that a full statement of difficulties which met the United Presbyterians in the way of Union had been made; that much discussion had taken place on points of difference, but that no definite conclusion had been arrived at. The Committee was re-appointed.

An erroneous statement had gained currency respecting a school in North Melbourne, described as a United Presbyterian school, and marked as one in the receipt of Government support. The Presbytery were surprised at the statement made in the school statistics, which were issued under the auspices of the Government. Upon

inquiry, it was found that the school was one originally connected with the Scots Church of that locality, and in that connection it had received support from the State. Subsequently the minister and the congregation to which the school was attached became members of the United Presbyterian Church. But the Presbytery had never been asked to sanction any application to Government for the school endowment, and knew nothing at all about the matter.

September.—It was reported that at length the Neil-street Church site had been purchased, and the title deeds might be prepared as the Presbytery would direct. The congregation reported that since the resignation of their minister a number of the members and adherents had fallen away; that, in consequence of this, the Committee had difficulty in their efforts to discharge the remaining debt amounting to £90; that they were convinced, if a suitable pastor were settled among them, a good cause might be established; that the prayer meeting was satisfactorily attended; and that the Sabbath-school was in a prosperous state.

It was agreed to give instructions that the title deeds of the Church property should be vested in three trustees—Rev. R. T. Walker, Rev. James Henderson, and Mr. John Gray—and meanwhile that the congregation be freed from all pecuniary liabilities at present resting on the property.

An interim report on Union matters was made, and the Committee was appointed.

December.—A communication on Union was laid on the table from the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, of which Rev. A. M'Vean was the representative. The object of the communication was to ascertain whether the alteration in the basis of Union which they —the Free Church Committee—suggest, would in any way embarrass negotiations going on between the Presbyterian Church of Victoria and the United Presbyterian Church. The Presbytery agreed to remit the matter to the Committee on Union.

The Presbytery's Committee intimated that they were considering a communication received from the Commission on Union of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

A communication was received from Rev. James Dick, in which he renewed his application for admission into the ministry of the Church. It was resolved that the application, with all accompanying documents, lie on the table till next meeting.

March, 1865.—No further steps had been taken with a view to Union. The Convener was instructed to prepare a draft of a letter in reply to the Commission of the Presbyterian Church. The Convener, Rev. A. D. Kininmont, had sent a letter dated 16th June, 1864.

Rev. A. M. Ramsay, in lieu of the Convener, had replied to the Commission on Union of the Free Church in terms of the minute which the Presbytery had framed, and that he had also forwarded to them a copy of the minutes of Conference on Union, held 31st July, 1854, and that no reply had yet been received.

Mr. Hamilton made some interesting statements in regard to the

evangelistic efforts now being made among the aborigines on the Upper Yarra. These efforts were put forth by Mr. John Green, the manager of a Government settlement of aborigines at Coranderrk. Mr. Hamilton had been in the habit for several years of visiting the aborigines, preaching the gospel to them—he having done so even before the settlement was formed, while they were wanderers in the bush—giving them at their settlement suitable books, with pictorial illustrations of scripture, and delivering lectures on scientific subjects with magic lantern to aid in expanding their minds.

The results that had sprung from Mr. Green's labours were marked and striking. He held religious service twice every Lord's Day. He had a Sabbath-school for the children, and instructed both young and old systematically in the truths of the gospel. Under the divine blessing on these evangelistic efforts, a good many had given evidence of a change of heart, and all had more or less afforded proof of the masterful influence of Scripture truth on their outward conduct.

Mr. Hamilton specially wished the advice of the Presbytery whether it would be in order for him to baptise the children of those who professed their faith in Christ, and who gave corresponding evidence in their life; and also to dispense among them the Communion of the Lord's Supper.

The Presbytery were of opinion that Mr. Hamilton was quite at liberty to dispense the ordinance, on the understanding that the parties participating in the ordinance have been formed into a Christian Church.

May.—Mr. Dick's application came on for consideration. He laid on the table a memorial from a number of Presbyterians in North Melbourne, praying the Presbytery to establish a preaching station among them, and to appoint Mr. Dick to occupy the position. If there had been more time, many more signatures would have been got. The Presbytery returned the memorial, to be presented at next meeting in a more complete form.

Mr. Henderson intimated that his congregation in Geelong had agreed to adopt a standing posture while singing the praises of God, if it was not at variance with the established form of Presbyterian worship. The Presbytery saw no objections.

June.—A draft of a letter on Union, in reply to the Commission on Union of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, was read and recommitted to the Committee.

The documents in connection with Mr. Dick's application, which had been laid on the table, were read and considered. It appeared that the documents were furnished by the Presbytery of Glasgow of the United Presbyterian Church. The Presbytery, after deliberation, agreed to receive Mr. Dick into ministerial connection. The Moderator, in the name of the Presbytery, gave him a suitable address, and his name was added to the roll.

August.—Mr. Dick had been engaged officiating at Broadmeadows, at Collingwood (Fitzroy), at John Knox Free Church, at St. Enoch's, Melbourne, and at Kilmore Free Church.

It was agreed to instruct the Committee on Union, in conducting negotiations with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, to stipulate that the removal of the official sanction by the said Church as a whole to State-support is an indispensable condition in all our Conferences with a view to Union.

There was brought under the consideration of the Presbytery the desirability of keeping the Home Church fully informed as to the relations which the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria bears to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and the reasons which influence them in declining, under present circumstances, to enter into Union with that Church. After discussion, it was agreed to address a letter to the Moderator of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, defining the position occupied by this Church relative to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and specifiying the difficulties which lie in the way of an incorporated Union with that Body.

October.—A letter was in course of preparation for the Home Synod. Another was intended for the United Presbyterian magazine, explanatory of the position occupied by this Church in relation to State-grants.

It was reported that Rev. James Dick had officiated in the vacant Free Church at Kilmore every Sabbath since August excepting one in St. Enoch's (now the Assembly Hall) and Fitzroy, and another in Broadmeadows.

It was resolved to re-open the Church at Soldiers' Hill under fresh arrangements. Rev. James Dick was in want of a settled sphere of labour, and there was no reason why he should not occupy that field, where an encouraging commencement had been made. Rev. R. T. Walker, with the consent of his Session, and under instructions from the Presbytery, held opening services on the 22nd inst., Mr. Dick officiating in the evening. Public worship would be regularly observed on succeeding Sabbaths.

Mr. Hamilton gave another report of a recent visit he had paid to the aboriginal station, Coranderrk. Mr. John Green was not only manager; he also held the appointment from Government of General Inspector of Aborigines. On 24th September, Mr. Hamilton preached to a congregation of more than seventy blacks. At the same time he dispensed the ordinance of baptism to twenty-seven adult aborigines—twenty-one men and six women. All of them had been put under a course of regular instruction, preparatory to the ordinance, by Mr. Green, in his character as a Christian evangelist. Mr. Hamilton also, on the preceding Friday, had joined two of the blacks together in marriage according to the Christian form. He had every reason to believe that they were sincere in taking upon themselves their marriage and baptismal vows. He had good hope through grace concerning them.

November.—Mr. Dick had conducted public worship at Soldiers' Hill since the re-opening of the Church. The audiences were increasing, and in so far as he could judge the prospects of the new cause were hopeful. He had also opened a preaching station at

Sebastopol, and he had arranged to hold one service there at least every Sabbath.

Rev. A. M. Ramsay had received a communication from Rev. John Inglis (afterwards D.D.), missionary, Aneityum, urging the claims of the New Hebrides Mission. It was agreed by the Presbytery to recommend this mission to the favourable consideration of all the congregations.

March, 1866.—Two conferences had been held between the Committee on Union and the Commission on Union of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and there had been several interchanges of correspondence. But it appeared that, prior to the reception of any communication from the United Presbyterians, the Commission on Union had been discharged. Hence no reply had been received. The following is a copy of the last letter sent by the United Presbyterian Committee :—

"Melbourne, 12th December, 1865.

"Rev. A. D. Kininmont, Convener of the General Assembly's Commission on Union.

"Rev. and Dear Sir,—The Committee on Union laid your communication on the table of a late meeting of Synod. It was considered in connection with the following letter addressed by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and which letter constituted the authority by which State-aid is distributed amongst the ministers of said denomination, viz :—

'Melbourne, 5th November, 1859.

'Sir,—I do myself the honour to inform you that the management of the grant from Government for stipends and buildings received by the Presbyterian Church of Victoria has been placed *by order of the General Assembly of that Church* under the charge of the Rev. I. Hetherington, Melbourne, as Convener of the State-grant Committee, and that all correspondence with Government in relation to that grant will be conducted by him.—I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

(Signed) Adam Cairns, Moderator.

'To the Honourable the Chief Secretary, Melbourne.'

"Whereupon the Synod instructed the Committee to write to the Commission on Union, and say that, until the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria discharge its State-grant Committee, and by a public and formal order withdraw the official sanction which that letter affords to the system of indiscriminate endowment of truth and error pursued by the Government of the Colony, and leave those ministers who feel that they can conscientiously and honourably take Government aid, to obtain it on their own individual responsibility—that until this is done the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria feel that, though sincerely and fervently desirous of Union on scriptural and common grounds, they cannot entertain the prospect of an incorporated Union.—I am, Reverend and dear sir, yours in the bonds of our common Christianity.

"(Signed) JAMES HENDERSON, Convener.

"P.S.—Should it be thought advisable to have another conference with us on the subject, I am authorised to say that the Committee on Union, consisting of Messrs. Ramsay, Hamilton and myself, will be happy to meet with the members of the Commission at any time or place that may be mutually arranged. J.H."

The Committee were thanked for their diligence, and were discharged.

Rev. J. Dick appeared as Commissioner on behalf of certain

members and adherents of the United Presbyterian Church at present worshipping at Soldiers' Hill, Ballaarat, praying by memorial to be constituted a congregation in connection with the United Presbyterian Church. The memorial was signed by twenty-four members and adherents.

After full inquiry into the prospects of the cause, it was agreed that the petitioners who are now in communion with the United Presbyterian Church or other accredited Christian Denomination be formed into a congregation in connection with the United Presbyterian Synod. Mr. Walker was appointed to officiate at Soldiers' Hill on the third Sabbath of March, and announce the deed of Synod in answer to their memorial.

Meanwhile Mr. Dick was authorised to examine candidates for Church privileges, and to dispense ordinances according to the rules.

The Rev. Robert Buchanan Scott, of Carlsruhe, appeared before the Presbytery, and presented a memorial signed by sixty-three office-bearers, members and adherents, praying to be received along with their pastor into ecclesiastical connection with the United Presbyterian Church. The memorial was accompanied by a letter from Rev. R. B. Scott, making application on his own behalf for admission into the Church after a period of separation.

The Presbytery, after deliberation, agreed to receive Mr. Scott and his congregation into re-union with the Church, and appoint Mr. Scott to make the announcement of the deed of Presbytery on Sabbath first to the congregation.

April.—Recognition Services were held at Carlsruhe, and excited deep interest. The re-union had afforded great satisfaction, and it was hoped that a new impulse had been given to the progress of God's work in the district.

May.—An extraordinary meeting of Presbytery was called by Rev. James Henderson, Moderator, to be held in Ryrie-street Church, Geelong, to consider the petition of Rev. J. Henderson for counsel and advice in connection with certain critical circumstances which had arisen in the congregation. After patient investigation and prayerful deliberation, it was resolved to dissolve the tie between Mr. Henderson and the Ryrie-street congregation. The tie was dissolved accordingly, and the pulpit declared to be vacant.

July.—The Rev. John Geddie (afterwards D.D.), the pioneer missionary on Aneityum, New Hebrides, appeared in the Presbytery, and gave an account of his visit to Nova Scotia and Canada, communicating much interesting information respecting the Presbyterian Churches in these countries, chiefly in regard to Union. Mr. Geddie expressed his confidence in the principles and position of the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and solicited an interest in the prayers and efforts of this Church on behalf of the New Hebrides Mission.

There was also present Rev. A. Michie, who had been on his way to the South Seas, to labour as a missionary in the service of the London Missionary Society. He was arrested, however, in his progress through his wife's illness, and has been obliged to look for

ministerial employment in the Colony. He has recently officiated in the vacant pulpit of Ryrie-street, Geelong.

The Geelong United Presbyterian congregation had met, and agreed to petition the Presbytery to secure for them the services of Rev. A. Michie for a period of three or even six months. It was found that Mr. Michie was an ordained missionary of the London Missionary Society, and that he was a Presbyterian both by training and principle, and the congregation promised suitable remuneration. The Presbytery finding that Mr. Michie was in a position to take temporary employment, and, that he was willing to place his services at the disposal of the Presbytery, they agreed to allocate him for a period of six months.

The Neil-street congregation, Ballaarat, now wish moderation in a call. It was appointed to take place on 17th July.

August.—Rev. James Dick was called to assume the pastorate of the Neil-street Church. The call was signed by thirty members and twenty-two adherents. He accepted the call, and the induction was carried into effect on 24th October.

The Presbytery agreed to present a congratulatory address to the recently arrived Governor, Sir John Henry Thomas Manners-Sutton. It would be presented on the 23rd inst., on the occasion of the *levée.*

The Committee on Union had held a conference with that of the Free Church. Documents had been exchanged, and friendly intercourse held. It had been anticipated that a joint meeting of the two Synods should have been held on the 21st inst., but, through some misunderstanding, the meeting required to be postponed.

October.—A movement was made by the Neil-street congregation, Ballaarat, to remove from their present site to a more suitable locality.

Rev. James Henderson was holding service at Sebastopol, with a view to the formation of a new congregation, and the prospects were encouraging.

November.—At the request of the Ryrie-street congregation, Geelong, Rev. A. Michie accepted from the Presbytery an appointment to continue his services for the next six months.

It was also agreed that the Presbytery should communicate with the Rev. Dr. Somerville, Secretary to the Foreign Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church, with a view to his giving publicity to the desire of the Geelong congregation to have a minister from Home, and should furnish information respecting their present position and their future prospects.

The Convener of the Committee on Union reported that there had been no meeting and no negotiation with the brethren of the Free Church, and that, according to reports which have appeared in the Press, these brethren had agreed upon Union with the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The Committee was therefore discharged.

CHAPTER IV.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF VICTORIA.—1865-1870.

Events of the Year.—1865.

January.—A unanimous call came out from the Presbyterians of Pentland Hills in favour of Rev. John Steele. Some difficulty intervened, and the Melbourne Presbytery, after inquiry, advised that it would be wise to delay the settlement of a minister. Mr. Steele, therefore, declined acceptance.

Bulla congregation complained to the Presbytery of their inability to fulfil their promise of stipend, on account of the removal of wealthy members from the district.

Two hundred Presbyterians of West Melbourne represented to the Presbytery that there was no place of worship for them in the district, and asked that steps might be taken to have them organised as a congregation and their wants supplied.

Rev. I. Hetherington preached at Hawthorn and presided at the call of a minister. The invitation turned out unanimously in favour of Rev. Peter Brown. The call was accepted, and the induction was effected on the 17th in the Town Hall.

February.—Mr. Alexander Morrison, Scotch College, informed the Presbytery that a movement was on foot, at Mornington, to secure for the Presbyterians there a regular supply of gospel ordinances, and that one gentleman had promised £100 per annum in addition to his usual contributions. A numerously attended meeting of Presbyterians in West Melbourne had been held, and resolutions were adopted to have a Church erected. An influential Committee was formed to promote the object, consisting of Messrs. Lawrence, Stevens, M'Naughton, Kilbourne, Douglas, Steward, and Paterson. These were commissioned to prosecute the matter before the Presbytery.

A progress report was made to the Melbourne Presbytery as to the training of students for the ministry. Rev. George Mackie resigned the Convenership of the Committee, and Rev. Peter Brown was appointed in his stead.

Rev. J. M'Cutchan resigned his pastoral charge of Woods' Point congregation on account of poor health. The resignation was afterwards accepted and the tie dissolved.

March.—Rev. Messrs. M'Gregor and C. Moir had visited Woods' Point, and reported that there was every prospect of a good congregation there; that subscriptions were promised to the extent of £220 per annum, besides ordinary collections and seat rents; and that a Sabbath-school was instituted under encouraging auspices.

A deputation from Chalmers Church appeared before the Presbytery, and intimated that, in consequence of Dr. Cairns's impaired health, the congregation had resolved, in accordance with medical

advice, that their minister should have twelve months' leave of absence, and they asked the Presbytery to give their sanction to the required furlough. The request of the congregation was cordially granted. Strong sympathy was expressed with the Doctor, and every hope was expressed that his visit to the Fatherland would, under the Divine blessing, prove completely restorative.

Rev. J. Galloway applied for a Presbyterial certificate, having the prospect of leaving the Colony.

April.—Rev. Andrew Robertson, Castlemaine, was called by the Presbyterians of West Melbourne. The invitation was signed by two hundred and twenty-five persons. The moderation had not been conducted in the usual form under the appointment of Presbytery. Waiving the irregularity, the call was sustained. A protest and appeal to the General Assembly was taken against the decision sustaining the call. This, however, was in due course accepted, and the induction was carried into effect on 29th June.

May.—Rev. A. Morrison and Rev. John Whyte were both recommended to the Commission of the Assembly for admission to the ministry of the Church.

The Presbyterians of South Gippsland having an opportunity granted of calling a minister, elected Mr. John Menzies, probationer. His ordination was carried into effect in August.

Mr. D. S. Brunton, in a letter to the Presbytery, stated that he had resolved to devote himself to the work of the ministry; that he had attended the University of Glasgow three sessions, and also the Theological College of the Presbyterian Church of England; that he had engaged more or less in evangelistic work for nearly six years; and that he was desirous of placing himself in the hands of the Presbytery, so that they might prescribe what was necessary in order to his preparation for license.

July.—Mr. J. S. Miller, student in theology, was recommended to the Assembly for authority to be taken on trial for license.

Rev. W. S. Login applied for authority to form a Session in the congregation of Sale.

The Trustees of the Pentridge congregation presented a memorial to the Presbytery, complaining of great financial difficulty.

August.—Mr. Ross, student, was put into the hands of the Examining Board. He had gone to Scotland, and had studied five sessions in the University of Aberdeen.

The attention of the Presbytery was called to the necessity of forming a new congregation in East St. Kilda.

Rev. Wazir Beg intimated by letter his intention to remain in New South Wales, and wished a certificate of ministerial status.

September.—Rev. Messrs. M'Culloch and M'Cay, from Ireland, were received by the Home Mission Committee into the ministry of the Church.

Pentland Hills and Ballan congregations wished to be joined in one charge.

It was agreed to commence public service at East St. Kilda as soon as a suitable place of meeting could be obtained.

Mr. J. Roberts was recommended for admission to the ministry by the Assembly.

Rev. G. Adam gave an interesting account of a tour he had made through various mining districts in Gippsland, and stated that in many instances the people were anxious for a supply of gospel ordinances from the Presbyterian Church.

Steps were taken with a view to promote the interests of the Infirm Ministers' Fund.

October.—Public worship was begun at East St. Kilda on the last Sabbath of September.

A call came out from Tarraville and Port Albert, in favour of Rev. L. Dobinson. The call was accepted, and the induction effected on 26th October.

November.—Rev. J. Menzies resigned his charge of Stratford, Maffra, &c., for various reasons, which gained the sympathy of the Presbytery and was released.

It was agreed to recommend to the Assembly that Rev. J. Roberts be admitted into the ministry of the Church.

December.—Rev. J. D. Dickie, formerly of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and Rev. W. B. Hutchison, M.A., formerly of the Free Church of Scotland, who had arrived in the Colony very recently, were cordially welcomed.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 2ND MAY, 1885.

REV. JAMES NISH, MODERATOR.

There were six items of business before the Commission. These had reference to the admission of Rev. A. Morrison and Rev. J. Whyte to the ministry—the scheme proposed for administering the Infirm Ministers' Fund—Report on Education—the mode of conducting the business of the Assembly—and the Report on the *Christian Review* and *Messenger*. Reports were also received on the Theological Hall and on Missions to the Heathen.

Rev. J. G. Paton appeared at the meeting, and was invited to sit as an associated member. Mr. Paton had represented that £1,200 a year would be required to meet the expense of the *Dayspring* mission ship. He reckoned on obtaining £700 of the amount from the other Australian Colonies, and he urged that the Presbyterian Church of Victoria should undertake the responsibility of raising the remaining £500. A contribution of £5, on an average, from each of the Sabbath-schools of the Church would accomplish the object.

In regard to the *Christian Review and Messenger*, it was reported that, in consequence of recent changes, the circulation had increased to over 1,800. It was recommended that a paid editor should be employed with a salary of £50 a year. The resolution was that the magazine should be under the joint editorship of Rev. D. M'Donald (afterwards D.D.) and Rev. J. Ballantyne, and that the salary to be paid by the proprietors be equally divided between them.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 13TH DECEMBER, 1865.
REV. T. HASTIE, MODERATOR.

The roll of Assembly on this occasion numbered ninety-seven.

Resignation	—Rev.	W. Beg—Port Albert and Tarraville.
,,	,,	W. Jarrett—Daylesford.
,,	,,	W. Leishman—Heathcote.
,,	,,	J. Service—Lower Avoca.
,,	,,	J. Treadwell—Balmoral and Harrow.
,,	,,	H. Thompson—Bright and Buckland.
,,	,,	J. W. M'Cutchan—Woods' Point.
,,	,,	P. Mercer—Echuca.
Induction	,,	L. Dobinson—Port Albert and Tarraville.
,,	,,	M. R Battersby—Maryborough.
,,	,,	J. F. Hill, ordained—Rushworth.
,,	,,	W. F. Main, ordained—Daylesford.
,,	,,	J. Henderson—Balmoral and Harrow.
,,	,,	W. Cullen—Bright and Buckland.
,,	,,	R. W M'Cully—Benalla and Mansfield.
,,	,,	J W. M'Cutchan—Majorca and M'Callum's.
,,	,,	P. Mercer—Deniliquin and Ulupna.
Translation	,,	A. Robertson—West Melbourne.

There were fifty-six points of business in the programme, and there were thirteen standing Committees appointed.

The Rev. J. Roberts and Rev. A. Morrison were received into the fellowship of the ministry.

Letters were read from the Moderator of Presbytery, of the Presbyterian Church of South Australia, and from the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, announcing the consummation of their Unions respectively, and expressing their desire for the closest fraternal relations with this Church.

The Convener of the Commission on Union with the other Presbyterian Denominations in the Colony reported that they had had correspondence with the Free Church of Victoria, and with the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria, but that no satisfactory progress had been made with either.

A letter was read, of date 18th January last, from the Convener of the Colonial and Continental Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, expressing their deep interest in the welfare of the Presbyterian Church in this Colony, and introducing Rev. J. O. Dykes as their deputy to this Assembly. Mr. Dykes was on a temporary visit to the Colony on invalid leave.

The Theological Hall Committee, anxious to avail themselves of his superior gifts and attainments while residing in Melbourne, recommended the Assembly to endeavour to secure his services as Theological Tutor during the coming year, taking charge of the students, and conducting their studies in such measure as his health would permit. Mr. Dykes accepted the invitation, conditional on his health not suffering from the task.

The Theological Hall dates its commencement from this time Rev. Dr. Cairns was appointed Principal, without salary. Encour-

aging progress had been made in creating a fund for endowment, but the Committee were not yet in a position to appoint permanent Professors.

The Assembly authorised the Presbytery of Wimmera to take Mr. H. Ellerman on trial for license and ordination, and meanwhile to employ him as a missionary within their bounds. A memorial from the congregation of Wimmera (North-west) stated that, in the event of Mr. Ellerman being admitted to the ministry, they would be prepared to call him to be their pastor.

The Assembly declared the time had come for them to extend their Mission agency. They had engaged Mr. Hagenauer as Missionary to the aborigines in Gippsland in 1862, on a reserve obtained from Government on Lake Wellington ; they now sanction the employment of Mr. Kramer on the same settlement, but recommended greater economy in the management. They also sanction the appointment of two aboriginal Christians, Nathaniel and Philip, as evangelists, to act under the superintendence of the Presbytery of Wimmera. The Assembly also rejoiced that Rev. J. Geddie's services as Missionary at Aneityum had been placed at the disposal of this Church, and that Rev. J. G. Paton was willing to be employed also as a Missionary of the Church of Victoria.

Rev. H. Blair, of Colac, had been incapacitated by severe illness from further prosecution of the work of the ministry. It was recommended that Mr. Blair's resignation of his charge should take effect without delay, and that the date of his resignation should not bar his interest in the Infirm Ministers' Fund so soon as the fund should become available.

Events of the Year.—1866.

January.—Rev. I. Hetherington preached at Schnapper Point on 20th, and began a regular supply of gospel ordinances. There was every prospect of a congregation being formed which would be self-supporting.

A unanimous call was brought out at Ballan and Pentland Hills in favour of Mr. Joseph Black. The call was signed by seventy members. The ordination was effected on 20th February.

Messrs. Brunton and Groundwater were both licensed on 5th February.

Rev. W. Souter obtained leave of absence on account of indisposition—the leave extending to nine or twelve months.

Divine service at Footscray and Maidstone, after its suspension for a time, was recommenced by Rev. J. Hampshire under encouraging circumstances.

March.—The Presbytery of Melbourne agreed to prepare a minute congratulating Rev. Dr. Cairns on his return to the Colony, and expressing thankfulness to God for the measure of restored health and vigour that had been vouchsafed to him.

Rev. J. Roberts, labouring in the district of Stratford, was authorised to celebrate marriages.

Rev. G. Graham, arrived recently in the Colony from Queensland,

was received into the ministry by the Home Mission Committee, and was welcomed by the Melbourne Presbytery.

April.—Rev. J. S. Miller was licensed on the 3rd to preach the everlasting gospel.

May.—A call issued on the 16th at Pentridge in favour of Rev. John Cooper, Rokewood, Presbytery of Geelong. The invitation was signed by seventy-three members and adherents.

June.—Rev. J. Cooper, having accepted the call, the induction was carried into effect on 20th.

Rev. Mr. Scrimgeour, of the Free Church of Scotland, recently arrived, and was welcomed as one who was likely to prove a great acquisition to the Church.

July.—The congregation of East St. Kilda was regularly organised. Rev. R. Scrimgeour was appointed to officiate for three months.

August.—Rev. Mr. Wither, late United Presbyterian minister of Wastray, Orkney, Scotland, had recently arrived, was welcomed, and was admitted to the ministry.

Rev. S. Cully, labouring at Campbellfield, was authorised to celebrate marriages.

Arrangements were made for having divine service conducted at the Benevolent Asylum and at the Melbourne Hospital.

September.—Service at Maidstone was discontinued, and it was arranged to have two services each Sabbath at Footscray.

December.—Rev. W. Souter received other three months' leave of absence for his health, the congregations of Mayfield and Whittlesea concurring. Janefield congregation was disjoined in accordance with previous arrangement, the charge of the whole three congregations being too numerous and extended; the deed of disjunction to take effect from 20th January.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 1st May, 1866.

Rev. T. Hastie, Moderator.

There were twelve items of business.

A somewhat complicated matter had arisen in connection with a call that had issued from Bellarine in favour of Rev. J. Steele. This had been a dual charge embracing Queenscliff. But the congregation at Queenscliff had made a movement with a view to occupying a separate and independent position. The Geelong Presbytery were divided as to the sustaining of the call, and there was a want of unanimity at Queenscliff. The matter came up to the Commission by reference, and by protest and appeal. The result was that the Commission dismissed the complaint and appeal, confirmed the decision of the Presbytery in sustaining the call, and instructed the Presbytery, in the event of the acceptance of the call by Mr. Steele, to settle him as minister of Bellarine, with Queenscliff attached, till the Assembly decide whether Queenscliff shall be formed into a distinct and self-sustaining charge.

There were reports, overtures, and references.

The reports had respect to the fund for bringing out ministers, education, Sabbath-schools, Theological Hall.

The overtures referred to family religion, and to the cultivation of a higher spiritual character.

The references brought up the Bellarine case—the application of Rev. A. Stoker, an Independent minister at Chiltern, for admission—and the case of the minister of Bright and Buckland who had misled the Home Mission Committee when he was admitted, he having suppressed information that was necessary to guide the Committee in their action. He had written a letter intimating his intention shortly to leave the Colony.

Rev. J. Oswald Dykes, of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, was present, and was made an associated member. Mr. Dykes had rendered important service since his arrival in connection with the *Christian Review*.

The Theological Hall was opened by Rev. Dr. Cairns, Principal, who delivered an admirable address, and received the cordial thanks of the Commission.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 13TH NOVEMBER, 1866.
REV. A. D. KININMONT, MODERATOR.

Induction—Rev.		A. Hanna, ordained—Wyndham, Little River, and Duck Ponds (Lara).
,,	,,	J. Black, ordained—Ballan and Pentland Hills.
,,	,,	J. D. Dickie—Colac and Ondit.
,,	,,	J. Steele (Ireland)—Bellarine and Queenscliff.
,,	,,	J. Anderson—Taradale and Malmsbury.
,,	,,	A. R. B. M'Cay—Castlemaine.
,,	,,	G. Graham—Maryborough.
,,	,,	W. B. Hutchison, ordained—Belfast.
,,	,,	H. C. Ellerman, ordained—Wimmera (North-west).
Resignation	,,	H. Blair—Colac and Ondit.
,,	,,	M. R. Battersby—Maryborough.
,,	,,	C. J. Baird—Inglewood.
,,	,,	J. F. Hill—Rushworth and Whroo.
,,	,,	S. A. Hamilton—Tarnagulla and Eddington.
,,	,,	G. Minty—Chiltern.
,,	,,	W. Cullen—Bright and Buckland.
Translation	,,	A. Proudfoot—Gladstone, Queensland.
,,	,,	J. Cooper—Pentridge.
Death	,,	J. Sutherland—Newstead.
,,	,,	J. Downes—Clunes.
,,	,,	J. Gow—Smythesdale and Scarsdale. (See page 35.)

There were fifty items of business before the Assembly.

This year there were ninety-three ministers on the roll, Melbourne Presbytery having about one-third of the whole.

The business extended over ten days, and embraced fourteen Sessions.

The number of Standing Committees appointed was fifteen. They were :—1, Sabbath-schools ; 2, Sabbath Observance ; 3, Home Mission ; 4, Mission to the Heathen ; 5, Widows and Orphans' Fund ; 6, Infirm Ministers' Fund ; 7, Finance ; 8, Statistics ; 9, *Christian Review and Messenger* ; 10, Fund for bringing out

Ministers; 11, Board of Examination; 12, Education; 13, Colleges; 14, Theological Hall; 15, Business.

The first business transacted was a resolution to present an address of congratulation to His Excellency the Governor, Sir John Henry Manners-Sutton, who had recently arrived in the colony.

It was announced at an early sitting that the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria had appointed a Committee on Union with this Church. A similar Committee was appointed to confer with them.

It was reported that the Committee on Union had met with that of the Free Church, and it was desired by them that the Assembly should hold a meeting for Conference this evening, for the purpose of receiving and considering a document on Union which they should submit.

It was afterwards reported that the draft of a Declaratory Act on Union, which had been submitted by Rev. J. O. Dykes to the Conference of the Assembly on Union, and which had been discussed and amended, had been cordially accepted, as amended by the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, as a basis on which they were prepared to unite with this Church. The draft was read and adopted by the Assembly. It was as follows:—

"Whereas it is at all times the duty of a Church of Christ to seek after the outward unity of the Body of Christ, in so far as the same may without sacrifice of principle be attained.

"And whereas it is especially to be desired that a Union should be formed, if possible, betwixt the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria and this Church;

"And whereas there is reason to believe that the obstacle to such Union consists in certain misunderstandings, to which some of the terms employed in the Articles of the basis of Union of this Church are believed by the brethren of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria to be fairly liable.

"The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, taking the premises into consideration, and with a view to open the way for Union with the said Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, resolves to declare, and hereby does declare, that it does not understand the terms of the said Articles of the basis of Union in the sense or the senses herein undernoted. That is to say—

"First.—Whereas the following words in Article II. of said basis, to wit: 'a difference of opinion in regard to the doctrines contained in these Standards relative to the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion' have been supposed by some to refer to portions of the said subordinate Standards other than that which treats directly of 'the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate' in the matters aforesaid, it is hereby declared that they have no such reference; and, further, that they do not imply a difference of opinion within this Church in regard to the doctrine of Christ's Headship over the nations, but only as to the mode and extent of the said doctrine to 'the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate' as bearing on the province of religion.

"Second.—That the following words in the said Article II., to wit: 'the liberty of personal conscience or the right of private judgment,' do not mean anything other than what is generally understood as liberty of conscience.

"Third.—Whereas these words in Article III., to wit: 'this Synod possesses supreme jurisdiction over its subordinate judicatories, congregations, and people,' have been supposed by some to imply a right or authority on the part of the said Synod or General Assembly, or Supreme Court of this Church which is inconsistent with the principles of Presbyterian Church Government,

laid down in the subordinate Standards and Formularies recited in Article I., it is hereby declared that they imply no such right or authority.

"Fourth.—Whereas the following words in Article III., to wit: 'will receive all ministers and preachers from other Presbyterian Churches applying for admission on an equal footing,' have been supposed by some to bind this Church to admit any or all ministers or preachers from other Churches merely because they apply for such admission, and without satisfactory inquiry into the character and qualifications of such applicants, it is hereby declared that they have no such binding force or meaning."

A Committee was appointed to make the necessary arrangements for the further prosecution of Union with the Free Church Synod before the rising of the Assembly.

Rev. Mr. Hampshire, officiating at Footscray, was admitted as a minister of the Church in full standing, but not without some difference of opinion.

Rev. J. W. Lawson arrived some months before with a recommendation from Rev. Dr. Johnstone, the Commissioner of this Church in Scotland, for the selection of ministers from the United Presbyterian body. It appeared that Mr. Lawson had received a complete ministerial education. He had been ordained a minister of the Independent Church. After a short period of service in that denomination he had separated from it, and, under thorough conviction of the scriptural warrant for Presbytery, he applied to Dr. Johnstone to be sent to the Presbyterian Church of this Colony. His application came before the Assembly by reference from the Home Mission Committee. After inquiry and conference, he was admitted on the usual probation, not being eligible for a call till after twelve months' service.

An important deliverance on education was proposed to the Assembly and adopted. The following is an extract indicating the mind of the Church in regard to religious instruction :—

"The General Assembly confines this deliverance to the important subject of religion, as an element in the education of the young in public schools. This Assembly declares anew the anxiety of this Church to see the Presbyterians of Victoria co-operating with their fellow-colonists in the management of public schools, provided religion be employed at suitable times in moulding the minds of the pupils. The Assembly believes this to be quite practicable even in such a mixed community as that of Victoria, while it is certain that a merely secular system would not only be wrong in principle but would also largely fail of success, inasmuch as it would forfeit the respect of a great proportion of the parents of children, and would provoke the establishment of private schools under denominational management, and in rivalry of schools supported by the State. This demand for religious influence in the management and teaching of schools is not confined to the clergy of any denomination. This Assembly declares itself very strongly against the teaching of sectarian doctrines in public schools. The only way of securing a right religious instruction in schools is through the teachers."

A new arrangement of Presbyteries was made. The Presbytery of Gisborne was formed, embracing the congregations at Ballan,

Bacchus Marsh, Melton, Gisborne, Lancefield, and Kyneton. There were now ten Presbyteries in the Church.

The congregations at Sale, Tarraville, and Stratford were constituted the Presbytery of Gippsland.

In the report on Heathen Missions it appeared that Rev. J. Geddie and Rev. J. G. Paton had become missionaries of this Church, and that Mr. Paton's efforts had been successful on behalf of the *Dayspring*.

Earnest attention was given to the necessity of missionary efforts on behalf of the Chinese.

The children of the Church, too, were appealed to on behalf of the Aboriginal Chapel in Gippsland, for efforts to clear off the debt, while assistance was sought from all friends to enable Mr. Hagenauer to stock the mission paddock.

Events of the Year.—1867.

February.—Janefield, Epping, and Campbellfield were united in one charge.

Rev. R. Scrimgeour had for some reason left Victoria for New Zealand, and he wrote from Dunedin to the Presbytery for a certificate of his status.

March.—Rev. G. Adam resigned his charge of the congregations at Brighton and Cheltenham, and the pastoral tie was in due course dissolved.

Rev. S. Kelly was located at Campbellfield, and was empowered to act as Moderator *pro. tem.* of the session of the triple charge.

April.—Application was made to the Melbourne Presbytery by Rev. J. Manby to be admitted to the ministry. He had studied four years in the Congregational College of this city. He had been duly ordained to the pastoral charge of a congregation at Inglewood. After full inquiry, finding the Presbyterian Form of Church Government was founded on the Word of God, he had resolved on seeking admission to the Presbyterian Church. Satisfactory testimonials were also presented.

June.—After conference and consideration, Mr. Manby withdrew his application for the present, with the view of prosecuting his studies for twelve months under the inspection of the Presbytery.

July.—A call issued from Footscray in favour of Rev. J. Hampshire. He cordially accepted, and the induction was carried into effect on 16th July.

Rev. A. M'Gregor resigned the pastoral charge of St. Andrew's congregation, Carlton. The pastoral tie between him and his congregation was dissolved.

October.—A call from Campbellfield, Mayfield, and Janefield was brought out in favour of Rev. S. Kelly. There were one hundred and twenty-one members and adherents whose names were attached to the call. The induction was effected on the 15th.

Rev. D. M'Rae resigned his charge of Kilmore through impaired health. After the usual steps to ascertain the mind of the congre-

gation, the resignation was accepted, and the pastoral tie was dissolved.

November.—The Presbytery of Melbourne agreed to apply to the Assembly about to meet, for authority to take Mr. Alexander Mackie on trial for license.

December.—Rev. J. S. Miller having resolved to pay a visit to Scotland, applied for a certificate of his status as a licensed preacher of this Church, which was granted.

Rev. T. Mackenzie Fraser, of Geelong, received a call from East St. Kilda, signed by forty members and adherents. The call was declined.

Rev. J. Caldwell resigned his charge of Collingwood congregation, having the prospect of a visit to the old country, and the connection between pastor and people was dissolved.

COMMISSION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 7TH MAY, 1867.
REV. A. D. KININMONT, MODERATOR.

There were eighteen points of business, including eleven reports, four overtures, one reference, and two items affecting the proposed deliverance on education.

Attention was called to the great loss which the Church had sustained by the death of the Rev. A. Love, of St. Andrew's Church, Geelong. The minute below was ordered to be inserted in the records of the Assembly.*

It was reported, on behalf of the Committee on Union, that a Bill to give civil effect to the Union with the Free Presbyterian Church had been prepared by the Committee, and that this Bill was now before Parliament. It was resolved that, as soon as the Bill before Parliament was passed, a meeting of the General Assembly should be called, when the proposed Union should be consummated.

The Committee on the Theological Hall reported that their application to Presbyterian families for contributions to establish an endowment fund had been liberally responded to, and that subscriptions had been received amounting to £3,884, while encouraging hopes were held out of still further contributions.

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* "The Commission having learnt of the death of the Rev. Andrew Love, of St. Andrew's Church, Geelong, desire to record their deep sense of the loss which the Church has sustained in his removal. Mr. Love was the second Presbyterian minister who arrived in the Colony, and during the twenty-seven years that have elapsed since his arrival, he has laboured assiduously for the establishment of the Church of Christ in Geelong, and in the Western district, extending from the Werribee to the Adelaide boundary, and in which for some years he was the only Presbyterian minister.

"In the pulpit, Mr. Love was a faithful expounder of the Word of God, holding forth in all simplicity the doctrines of the cross; while in the Church Courts he zealously maintained the principles and usages of our Scottish Presbyterianism.

"Warmly attached as Mr. Love was to the Established Church of Scotland, he threw himself heartily into the efforts for uniting the Presbyterian Churches of the Colony, and had the honour of being elected to the Moderator's chair of the General Assembly of the United Church in 1861."

The interest in Heathen Missions was maintained. The Committee was divided into two sub-committees, the one to have charge of the missions to the Chinese and the Aborigines, of which Rev. G. Mackie was Convener, and the other to have charge of the mission to the New Hebrides, of which Rev. D. M'Donald was Convener.

The Commission adopted a series of important resolutions on the subject of education, after receiving returns from the Presbyteries of the Church on a number of points ordered by the last Assembly to be submitted to their deliberation and judgment. These were the following :—

I. "This Church approves of the establishment of public schools of instruction from which sectarian education shall be excluded, and in which the children of all sections and classes of the community may be taught.

II. "It approves of the formation of local boards, in which the ratepayers contributing to the support of the schools and the parents of the children taught in them, shall be represented, and to which the appointment of teachers and the general management of the schools shall be entrusted.

III. "It approves of the establishment of a training institution for teachers, but would admit of teachers being eligible to appointments in the public schools, although they may not have been pupils in the training institution, provided they pass an examination entitling them to a certificate of requisite abilities and qualifications for the work of tuition.

IV. "It considers that in any Act passed by the Legislature on the subject of education, it should be left to the local boards to determine the kind and amount of special religious instruction that may be given at the hour or hours set apart for that instruction ; but that it should be enjoined that the religious instruction which may be imparted should not be of a sectarian or controversial character.

V. "It considers that as, in some cases, the local boards might neglect to make provision for any special religious instruction being given at all, the said local boards should be enjoined to attend to any memorial or representation on the subject that may be presented by the parents of the children attending these schools, and to give effect to these memorials if in consistency with the general scope and provision of the Act.

VI. "It is opposed to the erection and maintenance by separate grants of public money of other schools in connection with any religious body or sect whatsoever, inasmuch as the erection and support of such purely denominational schools would be, not only to preserve and perpetuate the sectarian element in a most objectionable form, but would be virtually to recognise the body or sect so privileged as standing in a relation to the Legislature, which would be offensive alike to the feelings and principles of all other denominations in the Colony, while it would inevitably sow the seeds of future strife and agitation, and lead to the fostering of a spirit of sectarianism which ought to be deprecated and avoided in a young and forming country.

VII. "It approves of the appointment of a Minister of Education, who shall be responsible to Parliament, and whose duty it will be to superintend the working of the measure, to watch generally over the interests of education in the Colony, and to dispose of whatever appeals it may be competent for him to entertain in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

VIII. "It approves generally of the Bill introduced into Parliament at the instance of the Royal Commission on Education, and feels that the thanks of the community are due to the members of the Royal Commission for their great services in conducting the inquiry into the working of the Common Schools' Act."

The roll of Assembly embraced ninety-two ministers.

Resignation	—Rev.	G. Adam—Brighton and Cheltenham.
,,	,,	D. M'Rae—Kilmore.
,,	,,	A. Hanna—Wyndham, Little River, and Duck Ponds (now Lara).
,,	,,	A. M'Gregor—St. Andrew's, Carlton.
,,	,,	J. S. Moir—Meredith and Lethbridge.
,,	,,	D. Galloway—Avoca and Bung Bong.
,,	,,	E. B. Steel—Creswick.
,,	,,	W. Graham—Casterton and Coleraine.
,,	,,	W. Robertson—Tower Hill.
,,	,,	R. M'Cully—Benalla and Mansfield.
Induction	,,	J. Hampshire—Footscray.
,,	,,	S. Kelly—Campbellfield, Janefield, and Epping.
,,	,,	G. C. Minty—Newstead.
,,	,,	S. A. Hamilton—Rushworth, Whroo, and Murchison.
,,	,,	J. Groundwater, ordained—Glengower and Deep Creek.
,,	,,	A. M. Smith, ordained—Smythesdale and Scarsdale.
,,	,,	J. Roberts—Stratford, Maffra, and Tinambra.
,,	,,	D. S. Brunton, ordained—Inglewood.
Translation	,,	W. C. Wallace—Moorabool.
Death	,,	A. Love—Geelong.

The items of business were set down as sixty in number.

In connection with the subject of Missions to the Heathen, the Assembly acknowledged with devout gratitude to God the large success which had attended the labours of Rev. J. G. and Mrs. Paton on Aniwa, and prayed that it might be the earnest of much greater progress. The Committee had applied to the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland for the transfer of the services of Rev. J. Cosh to this Church, and thanks were expressed to that Church for agreeing to the transfer. Satisfaction was expressed at the opportunities enjoyed of co-operating with neighbouring Presbyterian Churches in the work that was being carried forward on the New Hebrides Islands as well as in the support of the *Dayspring;* and the Committee was instructed to cultivate close relationship with sister Churches in these matters. The missionaries were assured of the sympathy of this Church with them in their labours and successes on the mission field, and its intention, by God's help, to assist them more and more.

Moreover, the Assembly, in reference to the Missions to the Chinese and Aborigines, resolved—"That an earnest effort should be made to obtain contributions in aid of the mission to the Chinese, and that, as soon as a sufficiency of funds could be obtained, endeavours should be put forth to seek out and engage catechists to be located on the principal goldfields throughout the Colony as well as in Melbourne and the suburbs; and that Rev. W. Mathew be asked to give such assistance as he was able towards the superintendence of these catechists; and, further, that an appeal should be made to other Evangelical Churches in the Colony to co-operate with the Assembly in carrying out this mission; that a memorial

be forwarded to the Government praying that immediate steps be taken to provide proper accommodation for the lepers at Ballaarat."

The Assembly further resolved—"That an earnest effort be made to have the school for the aborigines at Ramah-Yuk recognised by the Government as a common school, and the salaries usually allowed for such schools secured for it. The Committee was recommended to use means to provide Mr. Hagenauer with an assistant, to aid him in conducting the school, this arrangement to be carried out without increasing the expense of the mission."

Another of the important items of business which came before the General Assembly was the consummation of the Union between the Assembly and the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The Rev. A. D. Kininmont, as Convener of the Committee on Union with this Church, reported—"That the Bill to give civil effect to the proposed Union had been passed by both Houses of Parliament, and had been sanctioned by His Excellency the Governor, specially acknowledging the deep obligation which the Committee owed to Mr. James C. Stewart, one of their number, in the preparation of the Bill, to the Honourable George Higinbotham, and to the Honourable Robert S. Anderson, in getting it passed through Parliament, and recommending that, as all necessary preliminary arrangements had been made for the Union, the Assembly now proceed to its consummation."

"The Assembly learned with satisfaction that all necessary arrangements had been made for their Union with the Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, and resolved to proceed to the consummation of said Union."

It was made known that the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria were waiting in the vestry of the Scots Church. The Rev. I. Hetherington and Rev. T. Hastie were sent to communicate this resolution to them, whereupon there appeared before the Assembly the following members of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria:—The Rev. D. Meiklejohn, Moderator, and Rev. A. M'Vean; and Messrs. D. M'Murtrie, R. M'Leod, and D. Munro, elders. The Rev. J. Oswald Dykes also appeared with them as an associated minister. The Rev. D. Meiklejohn, Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Synod, called on the Rev. A. M'Vean, Clerk of the Synod, to read their minute recording their resolution as a Synod to enter into this Union. The minute having been read, the Rev. J. Anderson, at the call of the Moderator, engaged in prayer. After this the Moderator, in name of the Assembly, gave to the members of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church the right-hand of fellowship, and cordially welcomed them. Then the Rev. D. Meiklejohn, Rev. A. M'Vean, and Rev. J. Oswald Dykes addressed the Assembly, and expressed their entire satisfaction with the Union which had been consummated. The names of the members of the late Free Synod were consequently added to the roll, and were joined to the Presbytery of Melbourne. The

name of the Rev. J. Gardiner, minister of the congregation at Connewarre, in connection with the late Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, now absent from the Colony on leave granted by that Synod, was also added, and he was placed under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Geelong. Special gratitude was expressed as due to the Rev. J. O. Dykes, Rev. A. D. Kininmont, Rev. I. Hetherington, and Mr. J. C. Stewart for the important services rendered by them in connection with the Union which had been accomplished. It was also agreed to record their cordial thanks to the Hon. G. Higinbotham, and the Hon. R. S. Anderson, for their valuable assistance in the passing of the Union Act by the Legislature.

The Assembly received the gratifying intelligence from Rev. J. Mackersey, Clerk of the Presbytery of Tasmania, date 15th November, to the effect that the Presbytery of Tasmania had resolved to seek Union with this Church, and, with that view, to consult their congregations on the subject. A Committee was appointed to consider and report on said Union.

On the subject of the *Christian Review* and *Messenger*, it was resolved that a Committee be appointed to confer together regarding the management of the *Review* ; and that as heretofore there be seven departments in the *Review*, viz.—1. Leading Articles ; 2. Reviews ; 3. Home Intelligence ; 4. Devotional Extracts ; 5. Children's page ; 6. Missionary Intelligence ; 7. Tabular Statement respecting the Collection.

Rev. J. O. Dykes spoke on the subject, and referred to his having resigned connection with the *Review* as editor. The valuable service which he had rendered to the Church in the magazine was gratefully acknowledged.

In reference to the Theological Hall, Mr. J. Wilson, as joint convener with Rev. J. O. Dykes on the Committee, gave his report. Rev. Dr. Cairns, as Principal of the Hall, rehearsed operations during the Session. The work had been conducted by himself, the Rev. P. Brown, and the Rev. T. M. Fraser. There were five students under their charge, and these had prosecuted their studies in all departments with most satisfactory diligence. The Colony had been divided into districts, for convenience in canvassing for subscriptions.

The deliverance of the Assembly—"Acknowledged, with devout gratitude to God, the progress made last year in raising funds for the endowment of the Theological Hall, and instructed the Committee to take steps for carrying out the canvass of district No. 5, as soon as practicable, and to continue the collection of the subscriptions abroad, promised from other districts as instalments fell due ; renewed for this year the interim appointments already made for the conduct of the Theological Classes, but being deeply impressed with the great desirability of having a staff of permanent professors, agreed to aim at being in a position to erect at least one chair, and to take steps for appointing their first professor at next Assembly ; appointed the Principal and the ministers associated with him to act as a Com-

mittee for managing the internal affairs of the Hall, and to invest them with the power of a *senatus* while they continue in office; instructed the Committee to use diligence in endeavouring to secure for the students in theology a well-furnished library, and empower them to invite contributions of suitable books from friends, both at Home and in the Colonies, and to arrange for the safe keeping of such as may be received; remitted to the Committee to consider the best mode of raising a Bursary Fund to aid students in prosecuting their studies, said fund to be disbursed by the Committee conjointly with the *senatus*; and, finally, instructed the ministers of the Church to commend the Hall and its interests to the prayers and liberality of their respective congregations, and to offer special supplication to God to incline the hearts of godly and able young men within this Church to offer themselves to the ministry of the gospel."

The following gentlemen were appointed as additional trustees for the Theological Hall Endowment Fund:—Messrs. J. D. Wyselaskie, of Narrapumalap, and Adam Turnbull, of Wininburn, for No. 3 district; and Messrs. C. Wilson, of Walmer, and A. Scott, of Warracknabeal, for No. 4 district.

A highly complimentary resolution was adopted by the Assembly in honour of Rev. A. D. Kininmont, Convener of the Home Mission Committee, on the occasion of his resigning his office. "They received his resignation with the deepest regret. They recognised with the utmost gratitude the eminent services which he had rendered to this Church in that capacity during the past six years. They recorded their high sense of the kindness, urbanity, wisdom, and zeal which had characterised his Convenership, and the eminent success which had attended his administration of that important scheme, and they accepted his resignation only at his own urgent request, and on the ground that they could not conscientiously ask his congregation to make further sacrifices of their minister's time, health, and labours. They earnestly pray that God may abundantly reward His servant for the years of toil spent in the Home Mission work of this Church."

The Rev. James Lyall, a deputy from the Presbyterian Church of South Australia, and the Rev. William Ross, M.A., Ph.D., a deputy from the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, appeared at this Assembly, and expressed their lively sympathy with the Church in all its operations, and their ardent desire for the cultivation of the closest fraternal relations.

Events of the Year.—1868.

February.—Rev. A. Murdoch having resigned his charge of the Yea congregation, the pastoral tie was dissolved.

Mr. Alexander Mackie was, under the Assembly's authority, licensed to preach the gospel, and his name was placed on the list of probationers.

April.—A call from St. Andrew's Church, Carlton, issued in favour of Rev. Duncan Stewart M'Eachran, minister of the Free Church at Cromarty, Scotland. The call was signed by seventy-

nine members and adherents. The stipend promised was £800 per annum, with £200 for passage money.

A minute was agreed upon to record the Presbytery's deep sympathy and condolence with the bereaved wife and family of the late Rev. Angus M'Donald, minister of the congregation at Hamilton, who was suddenly killed by a fall from his horse.

June.—Rev. David Boyd, Heidelberg, received an address signed by 105 members and adherents of his congregation as an expression of esteem and confidence.

A unanimous call issued from St. George's congregation, Collingwood, in favour of Rev. W. F. Main, of Daylesford, Presbytery of Castlemaine.

July.—Rev. D. Rattray, late of the United Presbyterian Church, Scotland, had been received into the ministry by the Home Mission Committee, and was cordially welcomed by the Melbourne Presbytery.

In accordance with the wish of the congregation of the Scots Church, Collins-street, the Presbytery arranged to have the pastorate constituted a collegiate charge, with a view of obtaining relief for Rev. I. Hetherington, their minister. He had spent a long pastorate of thirty-one years in Australia, and, with growing infirmities, he stood in need of assistance in his ministerial work. No sooner was this arranged than the congregation held a meeting, under Presbyterial appointment, with a view to calling a minister to be his colleague. On the 23rd June the moderation took place, when the call turned out in favour of Rev. Peter Menzies, late of the Established Church, Scotland, and it was signed by two hundred and fifty members and adherents. Mr. Menzies accepted the invitation. The stipend promised was £800 per annum. The same sum was to be given to the senior minister. The induction was carried into effect on the 20th August.

August.—A meeting of the second congregation (Kilmore) was called on the 18th, to elect a minister. The call issued in favour of Rev. R. Hunter, licentiate. He accepted, and the ordination was effected in the West Church, Kilmore, on 30th September.

September.—Rev. A. Morrison having an appointment to officiate for a period of three months in St. Andrew's Church, Carlton, received authority to celebrate marriages.

October.—Rev. J. Michael, from New Zealand, had applied for admission to the ministry of the Church. He was received by the Home Mission Committee, and welcomed by the Presbytery of Melbourne.

A movement took place at Northcote with a view to having a regular supply of gospel ordinances. And inasmuch as the residents would not be able to undertake the support of a minister single-handed, it was suggested to them that it might be united to one or two neighbouring districts, thereby forming a new cause and extending the blessings of the gospel. It was ultimately arranged to join Heidleberg to Northcote, and, consequently, to separate Kangaroo Ground from Heidelberg.

November.—Rev. D. S. Boyd resigned his charge of the united congregations of Heidelberg and Kangaroo Ground. The pastoral tie was dissolved on the 1st December.

There was initiated by the Assembly, at the meeting this month, the practice of nominating the Moderator for the chair of the Assembly, by a Committee consisting of the ex-Moderators, the Moderator for the time being, and the Assembly's Clerk.

December.—Rev. D. S. M'Eachran, minister-elect of St. Andrew's Church, Carlton, had arrived in the Colony in obedience to the call of the congregation, and was introduced to the Melbourne Presbytery, by whom he received a cordial welcome. The call was put into his hand, which he cordially accepted. The induction was carried into effect on 15th.

COMMISSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 5th May, 1868.

Rev. A. J. Campbell, Moderator.

According to a resolution of the preceding Assembly, the roll was now amended. During the first half of the year, therefore, the following casualties affecting the ministry occurred.

Resignation	—Rev.	J. Caldwell—Collingwood.
,,	,,	A. M. Smith—Smythesdale and Scarsdale.
,,	,,	P. Simpson—Horsham.
,.	,,	J. D. Robertson—Wangaratta.
Induction	,,	L. Roxburgh, ordained—Wedderburn.
,,	,,	J. Steele, M.A., ordained—Rokewood.
,,	,,	D. Galloway—Piggoreet.
,,	,,	F. Rae—St. Andrew's, Geelong.
,,	,,	J. F. Hill—Meredith.
,,	,,	R. Kennedy—Creswick.
Death	,,	A. M'Donald—Hamilton.

A programme of twenty items of business was arranged.

An important resolution was adopted for the prosecution of Home mission work. It was agreed to put forth a vigorous effort for the purpose of collecting £1,000, so that an effective appeal might be made to the parent Churches in Scotland and Ireland for a supply of ministers. The country was divided into ten districts, and the same number of deputations were appointed to visit and canvass the several Presbyteries for contributions.

In regard to the Missions to the Chinese and Aborigines, on whose behalf a special interest was felt, it was agreed to instruct the Committee to put themselves in communication with Rev. W. Mathew, with the view of his being set apart by the Assembly to superintend the Chinese Mission. It was known that Mr. Mathew had been earnestly studying the Chinese language, and was manifesting a lively interest in the spiritual welfare of the heathen residents from China. A vast number of these had come and settled chiefly at the gold mines. And it was felt to be the indispensable duty of the Church of Christ to seek the enlightenment and salvation of the idolaters who had come to the Colony. The Committee were also instructed to take immediate steps for

raising at least £200, to be given to the Superintendent of the Chinese Mission, in addition to the £300 contributed by J. M., to meet the expenses of the Mission in Ballaarat. The Committee were specially appointed to convey to the contributor designating himself J. M. the high appreciation of his liberality entertained by the Commission.

The person referred to as J. M., who contributed so large an amount, is deserving of more than a mere passing notice. The initials of the name of this friend to missions naturally excited great curiosity as to who he was who manifested such liberality. His modesty could not long conceal his real personality. His generosity in this instance was not by any means an isolated act. For some time previous to this exercise of beneficence, he had been in the habit of contributing to the funds of the City Mission in donations of £5 or £10 at a time, under the same signature, without ever disclosing his real name or address. His liberality did not always assume the same striking aspect as the one recorded on behalf of the Chinese. At the same time his generosity to the City Mission would occasionally rise to £100. But his free-handed sympathy with missions was a constant stream. As long as he lived his practical benevolence never ceased to flow. One distinguishing and beautiful feature in his liberality, besides its modesty, was its spontaneousness. His givings were not the result of any importunity or moving appeals made to his generous nature.

Indeed his employment, his humble style of living, his retiring manners, his unpretending place of business, and his lowly abode, would not readily have suggested the hope of success in any application that might be made to him for help in benevolent and Christian operations. So far from encouraging personal appeals, whether to his feelings or his judgment for aid to needful causes, he almost always resisted them. His gifts must be the result of his own free action. Not only will his right hand be kept in ignorance of what his left hand did, but he will part with his gifts only after prayerful consideration and a simple sense of duty. He did not seek praise from man.

But who was this distinguished benefactor of missions? He was a native of Glasgow, Scotland. An affection of asthma led him to try the colonial climate of Canada, but finding this no improvement on his native air, he came to Victoria. He was not a man of capital, but was disposed to accept any humble and remunerative employment that Providence might throw in his way. His first engagement was in a small company to put up fencing by contract in the interior of the Colony. At this early period in his career, it was a principle, on which he resolved to act in the expenditure of his earnings, that he should consecrate a certain proportion—it might be a tenth—to objects of a charitable or religious kind. The contract turned out profitably. A second contract of a similar kind was proposed, but his fellow-contractors for some reason would have J. M. to work for wages outside the contract. He quietly submitted, and at the end of the job he had his wages clear, while the

contractors had nothing for their pains. His name, James Murdoch, may well be recorded.

At length he settled in town, and the business of a grocer commended itself to him as a means of occupation. He commenced on a humble scale, and his business principles were characteristic. These were low prices, cash payments, and short hours of business. Economy was the basis of all his arrangements. He always bought goods with ready money, and so he could sell cheap. He employed young people as his assistants, and trained them for himself. He watched them carefully without appearing to do so, and encouraged the trustworthy and capable. His business prospered amazingly. He opened similar business places in other parts of the city, and in the suburbs, till he had about half-a-dozen. His profits soon raised him to comparative independence. And with his increasing gains he manifested corresponding liberality. Although his acts of charity were never fully known, yet it is safe to say that he dispensed some hundreds of pounds annually. The objects which specially commended themselves to his generous consideration were the City Mission and the Chinese. He was a member of the Napier-street Church, Fitzroy, was a Sabbath-school teacher, and became an elder. He commended himself to his fellow Christians by his consistent walk, his high moral and religious tone, his unbending integrity, and his exemplary liberality. His last abode was in Port Melbourne, where he fell asleep in the hope of resurrection to life everlasting, leaving a wife and young family to lament his loss.

An important communication was read from Messrs. Nutt and Murphy, solicitors to the trustees of the late Mr. Hastie, of Corangamite, squatter in the Western district, dated 30th April, addressed to the Moderator, intimating that Mr. Hastie had bequeathed a portion of his estate to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the amount of which was to be determined by the trustees according to their discretion ; and inquiring to what uses the Presbyterian Church of Victoria would propose to devote the portion of the said estate which might be received by them. It was found that there were large legacies left to the Church of England and to the University, as well as to the Presbyterians, besides those bequeathed to the relatives. The will required that there should be no administration so long as the youngest beneficiary of the relatives survived. Only an Act of Parliament could secure an earlier distribution. Moreover, the will was controlled by an Act limiting the accumulation of interest on the estate to twenty-one years. It would be necessary at the end of this term—in 1887—that an arrangement should be come to by all parties interested under the determination of the law courts. By the end of this period the capital and interest might be expected to reach over £100,000.

CHAPTER V.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 10th November, 1868.
Rev. P. Brown, Moderator.

The entire roll of the ten Presbyteries embraced ninety-nine ministers.

Induction	—Rev.	P. S. Menzies, collegiate—Scots Church, Melbourne.
,,	,,	R. Hunter, ordained—Kilmore West.
,,	,,	D. S. Brunton—Queenscliff.
,,	,,	G. Mather, Avoca—Bung Bong, and Amphitheatre.
,,	,,	C. J. Baird—Smythesdale and Scarsdale.
,,	,,	W. J. Gillespie—Casterton and Coleraine.
,,	,,	A. Murdoch—Benalla.
,,	,,	G. Adam—Koroit.
,,	,,	J. D. Robertson—Horsham.
Translation	,,	W. F. Main—Collingwood.
,,	,,	D. Renton—Heathcote.
,,	,,	J. Anderson—Wangaratta and Oxley.
,,	,,	J. Lambie—Werribee and Melton.
Resignation	,,	J. Groundwater—Glengower.
,,	,,	W. Mathew—Pleasant Creek.
,,	,,	W. B. Hutchison, M.A.—Belfast.

There were fifty items of business on the programme, and sixteen standing Committees for carrying on the work of the Assembly.

The subjects engaging the attention of this Assembly, although numerous, were yet not marked by any special importance beyond that belonging to the ordinary routine.

The work of Missions, Home and Foreign, necessarily always commands a lively interest. The Assembly were able to acknowledge the goodness of God in the marked success of the missions during the past year. They approved of setting apart Rev. W. Mathew as Superintendent of the Chinese Mission, directed that a further branch of the Chinese Mission should be opened within the bounds of the Presbytery of Beechworth, accepted the superintendence of the Ebenezer Aboriginal Mission on the Wimmera, without being responsible for the entire support, and commended these missions to the prayers of the people, and to the blessing of the Great Head of the Church.

It was agreed to admit Rev. J. Manby to the ministry of the Church.

Rev. J. W. Lawson was found to be exercising his ministry, doing good service in a destitute part of Gippsland, and was commending himself to the acceptance of the brethren. The Assembly agreed to put him under the superintendence of the Presbytery of Gippsland until the Commission.

A troublesome case, affecting a minister in the Geelong Presbytery, occupied a large share of the Assembly's time, and resulted in a confirmation of the Presbytery's action in the matter.

It appeared that a call had issued from Hay, Riverina, in favour of Rev. S. A. Hamilton, and the Presbytery of Castlemaine wished to know the mind of the Assembly, as to whether the congregation at Hay should be constituted a charge in connection with the Presbytery, or be handed over to the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales. It was resolved that the various parties interested be communicated with, and that Mr. Hamilton meantime be relieved of his charge at Rushworth and be located at Hay, his status in the Presbytery to be retained.

The subject of Union with the Tasmanian Church had been more or less engaging the attention of the Assembly since the Union of 1859. And now it was reported that a Bill had been prepared for the Tasmanian Parliament to give civil effect to the proposed Union. Rev. J. Service, of St. John's Church, Hobart Town, appeared as a commissioned deputy of the Presbytery of Tasmania. The Assembly approved of the Bill, suggesting at the same time an alteration in one point, and gave instructions for the prosecution of negotiations, the Union to be consummated when the Legislative sanction had been obtained.

An encouraging account of the state of the Theological Hall was given, both as to the progress of the students and as to the endowment fund. It was proposed to prepare a scheme for the Institution of Scholarships, and the Assembly heard with much satisfaction of valuable donations of books which were promised for the Theological Hall library.

Rev. J. Ewence, an ordained minister of the Baptist denomination, had applied to the Presbytery of Mortlake for admission into the ministry. The Assembly, on reviewing the case, decided not to entertain the application in its present form, but instructed the Home Mission Committee to employ him where his services might be required.

Events of the Year.—1869.

February.—Rev. D. S. Boyd applied for a Presbyterial certificate, which was granted in the usual form.

Kangaroo Ground congregation was joined to that of Yarra Flats, and constituted a separate charge.

March.—Rev. W. R. Muir, a licentiate of the Free Church of Scotland, had arrived, and was received into ministerial connection by the Home Mission Committee. He received a cordial welcome.

Rev. L. Dobinson died suddenly at Rushworth, leaving a widow and family, for whose support provision required to be made. Wide spread sympathy was felt on their behalf. Vigorous efforts were put forth in order to save them from distress. The result was so successful as to secure for them a comfortable free cottage in Fitzroy, and a small annuity besides. The sum of £795 was collected.

Rev. D. Fraser having resigned his charge of St. John's, Ballaarat, and having come to establish an academy at St. Kilda for the instruction of youth, he obtained recognition from the Presbytery as to his full ministerial standing.

Rev. A. Grahame had departed this life in the district of Long wood. The charge, therefore, was vacant.

April.—An important legal point had been started respecting the powers of trustees of Church property. The question arose out of the refusal of certain trustees to carry out the wishes of the congregation. The matter was brought before the law advisers of the Church, and also before the Honourable the Commissioner of Lands, who himself was an experienced lawyer. The answer was clear and decided. "So long as a deed of grant had not issued to congregations, trustees were to be regarded merely as agents acting on behalf of the congregation by which they had been nominated. In the event of their refusal to carry out the wishes of the said congregation, and the congregation in consequence of that refusal requiring their displacement, the Presbytery in such a case has full power to remove them and elect others in their stead."

An opening for the establishment of divine ordinances presented itself at Spring Creek, about fourteen miles beyond Kilmore. An arrangement was made to supply the want.

The district of Seymour and Avenel was brought under the notice of the Presbytery with a view to the formation of a new congregation. Steps were taken to ascertain the wants and resources of the district.

Rev. S. Kelly tendered the resignation of his charge at Campbellfield, Janefield, and Epping. He did so on the ground of his health not being adequate to the strain of work required of him.

May.—A call issued from John Knox congregation in favour of Rev. John W. Inglis, of Sandridge. The call was declined.

Forty-five members and adherents of the Presbyterian order, resident at Elsternwick, united in expressing to the Presbytery a desire to be organised as a congregation. They proposed to go forward with the erection of a Church which would cost £1,200 to £1,500. The Presbytery were pleased, and, of course, they acquiesced.

Rev. Donald M'Rae received a Presbyterial certificate on application, because he contemplated leaving the Colony.

Rev. J. Allsworth, officiating at Spring Creek in the service of the Presbytery, wished authority to celebrate marriages. He was informed he would require first to accept a three months' location in one or other of the fields of the Church.

A call came out from St. John's Church, Ballaarat, in favour of Rev. J. W. Inglis, of Sandridge. Mr. Inglis accepted, and was separated from his charge at the Port.

A unanimous call was brought out at Brighton and Cheltenham on behalf of Rev. D. H. Ballantyne. He accepted the call, and was inducted into his new charge on 31st May.

The Presbyterians of Elsternwick were formally organised on 10th May.

June.—Rev. Mr. Cameron was introduced to the Presbytery by the Convener of the Home Mission Committee as a recent arrival who had been admitted into the ministry of the Church. He had

been ordained by the Glasgow Presbytery of the Established Church of Scotland. He had been sent to Bombay to superintend the Church of Scotland Mission there. His health became impaired by the severity of the Indian climate, and he had resolved to seek restoration in the Colony, and to cast in his lot with the Presbyterian Church. He was heartily welcomed.

An arrangement was made for having the Hospital and Benevolent Asylum regularly visited. Rev. J. Hampshire, of Footscray, was appointed to the work. His duty would be to visit these institutions three days in the week, and to act under the superintendence of a Committee. His remuneration would be £100 per annum, to be raised by the congregations.

A supply of gospel ordinances was agreed upon for Seymour and Mangalore. It was ascertained that there were seventy-five families residing within a radius of what might be considered a manageable area to constitute one pastoral charge. Encouraging promises were given of pecuniary support. It was, therefore, resolved to make Seymour the centre of evangelistic work.

July.—A call was agreed upon at Elsternwick in favour of Mr. W. K. Muir, probationer. The call was signed by forty-eight members and adherents. Mr. Muir accepted, and was ordained on the 29th.

Authority was obtained by the Brighton and Cheltenham congregations to elect elders.

August.—Inquiry was made into the state of the funds realised from the leasing of the Church site in Albert-street, East Melbourne, for temporary building purposes. The trustees were responsible for all moneys received by them as rents. In connection with this subject the discussion that ensued elicited the idea of a Ladies' College. The site in Albert-street, intended originally for a place of worship, was not conveniently situated, and was not likely ever to be required for that purpose. With the consent of the Government the Trust could be changed to admit of an institution being formed in an admirable position for a Presbyterian Ladies' College. Arrangements were made to carry the change of Trust into effect.

A report was made to the Presbytery respecting Campbellfield, to the effect that further pulpit supply for the present was not wanted.

September.—Rev. D. Fraser, having found it inexpedient to prosecute educational pursuits at St. Kilda, was appointed to give supply for a time at Northcote, Janefield, and Epping, and at the last mentioned locality to administer the Lord's Supper.

A communication was received by the Presbytery from Dr. Wilkie, elder in the Scots Church, Collins-street, setting forth that the revenue accruing to the congregation from the leasehold properties on the rear of the Church grounds amounted to £473 10s. per annum, and that the rents, in so far as they exceed £150, have hitherto been expended without the consent of the Presbytery or of the General Assembly, as required by the Trust. By an Act of Parliament the duties of the trustees in the matter of rents accruing from leasing the Church lands are clearly defined. In proof of

deviation from the directions of the Trust, attention was called to a printed abstract of accounts of the Scots Church for the year 1869.

October.—A report was laid before the Presbytery, from a Committee appointed by the Session of the Scots Church, to consider and report on the communication of Dr. Wilkie. The report represented that the consent of the Presbytery had been obtained to the administration of the revenue arising from the leases of the ground belonging to the Church, and evidence could be produced of such consent having been granted by the Presbytery. A Committee was appointed to make full inquiry, and to meet with Dr. Wilkie and the Session. The result was a report in favour of the action of the Trustees.

A call had issued from the Sandridge congregation on 22nd September in favour of Rev. J. M'L. Abernethy, M.A., of Eaglehawk. The call was accepted, and the induction was effected on 8th November.

The Campbellfield Church was re-opened.

November.—A call was brought forth by John Knox congregation in favour of Rev. M. Caldwell, Mount Gambier, of the Presbytery of Hamilton. A guarantee accompanied the call for stipend to the extent of £500. The call, however, was not accepted.

An important point was considered in reference to the trusteeship of lands obtained by Crown grant. The question was whether the Presbytery had exceeded their powers in removing three of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church reserve, Albert-street. The conclusion arrived at was to the effect, that it was the opinion of the law advisers of the Church that the Presbytery had not exceeded their powers in removing, or recommending the Government to remove, three of the Trustees of the Presbyterian reserve Albert-street. It was the opinion of the law advisers of the Church that, till a deed was granted, the Crown could remove any trustees at its pleasure.

The question arose out of the proposed change of Trust from a Church reserve to that of a Ladies' College, the old trustees being unfavourable to the transference.

It was arranged to separate Janefield from Campbellfield, and to constitute Heidelberg and Janefield one charge, and Campbellfield and Epping another.

December.—Rev. W. K. Muir had been suddenly removed from his brief ministry at Elsternwick by death.*

MEMORIAL MINUTE.

*The Presbytery agreed to record their appreciation of the many excellent gifts with which Rev. W. K. Muir was endowed, and of the loss sustained by the Church through his early departure. During the short interval between his arrival in the Colony and his decease, he had endeared himself to all who came in contact with him by the amiability of his disposition, his unassuming manners, the extent of his learning, and his abilities as a preacher of the gospel. God seemed to have sent him as at once a promise and a warning, and no sooner was the tie formed that bound him to a people than it was dissolved by death, and he was suddenly removed to the presence of his Lord in heaven.

A call issued from Heidelberg and Janefield on 29th November in favour of Rev. D. Fraser. The stipend promised was satisfactory. The call was accepted, and the induction was carried into effect on 20th December.

The attention of the Presbytery was called to the week of prayer proposed by the Evangelical Alliance to be held by Protestant Churches throughout the world, and the hope was expressed that as many of the congregations as possible within the bounds would join in the general concert.

COMMISSION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 4TH MAY, 1869.

REV. P. BROWN, MODERATOR.

The roll was amended in accordance with the changes that had occurred during the first half of the year.

Induction	—Rev.	D. S. M'Eachran—St. Andrew's, Melbourne.
,,	,,	A. Mackie, ordained—Echuca.
,,	,,	J. Smeaton—Daylesford.
,,	,,	W. Campbell—Carngham.
,,	,,	J. Michael—Belfast.
,,	,,	J. Anderson—Wangaratta.
,,	,,	R. J. Smith—Mansfield.
Translation	,,	S. Kelso—Pleasant Creek.
,,	,,	J. K. M'Millan, B.A.—Hamilton.
Resignation	,,	D. Boyd—Heidelberg and Kangaroo Ground.
,,	,,	S. Kelly—Campbellfield, Epping, and Janefield.
,,	,,	J. W. M'Cutchan—Majorca.
,,	,,	A. Wither—Clunes.
,,	,,	A. Crawford—Burrumbeet.
,,	,,	R. Falconer—Penshurst, Caramut, and Dunkeld.
,,	,,	D. H. Ballantyne—Albury and Belvoir.
Death	,,	A. Grahame—Longwood.

There were twenty-five items of business on the programme.

At this meeting of Commission the powers and duties of the law agent of the Church were defined.

"The duty of the law agent is to transact all legal business which may arise affecting the interests of the Church. He is the Convener of the Law Committee. When the business to be transacted involves an important question, he submits it to the Committee, by whom he is instructed as to the action to be taken. When the business does not involve an important question, but is simply a matter of detail, it is transacted by the agent without reference to the Committee. In examining and perfecting titles to properties, and in bringing and defending actions in the law courts, the usual professional fees are charged. In all other matters, such as giving advice to ministers and trustees on questions affecting the rights and properties of the Church, no fees are charged."

Mr. J. C. Stewart was appointed law agent for the Church.

An important and exemplary case of benefaction came to light on this occasion. The Messrs. Elder, of the Kuruc Kuruc estate, conferred an endowment of £1,000 on the Rokewood congregation, for the benefit of the minister. At the same time they stipulated that

the pews held by them in the Rokewood Church should be secured to them and to their heirs in perpetuity. This object could be obtained, not by a legal bond, but by the united agreement of the congregation, the Presbytery, and the General Assembly. No difficulty would be felt in gaining the consent required.

The Committee on the Theological Hall recommended a scheme for the election of Professors of Theology.

1. "The election of professors to be in the hands of the General Assembly.

2. "Presbyteries to nominate such persons as they may judge fit for each vacant chair. Such nominations to be made two months at least before the meeting of the General Assembly, who shall forthwith publish the same in the *Christian Review.*

3. "Members of Assembly to have the right of proposing additional names; notice of such proposal to be sent to the Clerk of Assembly at least one month before the meeting of the Assembly, and published by him in the *Review.*

4. "The nominees to form the list of candidates from which the Assembly will select."

Proposals were submitted to the Commission through the Education Committee by Mr. Alexander Morrison, Principal of the Scotch College, in regard to the education of the sons of ministers, and the erection of a Hall, a residence for the Principal, and additional dormitaries in connection with the College.

The resolutions adopted by the Commission were these:—

I. "That the scheme for the education of the sons of ministers be cordially approved, and that it be remitted to the Education Committee to take the necessary steps to carry it into effect, the said scheme being as follows:—

1. "That of the forty resident boarders who can be accommodated in the College, three should be ministers' sons, and be received at the rate of forty guineas *per annum.* 2. That for those who cannot be received as resident boarders, suitable provision for board be made at moderate cost outside the College. 3. That to enable country ministers to carry out either of these plans, a fund be raised by the Church for providing annual bursaries of twenty pounds each, the fund to be called the Scotch College Bursary Fund for the education of ministers' sons. 4. That the bursaries be allocated by the College Committee, who should also decide who should be received into the College as resident boarders. 5. That the donor of a bursary should be privileged to nominate any minister's son as the holder of the same, subject to the approval of the Committee. 6. That no boy should hold a bursary longer than three years, say, from the age of twelve to fifteen. 7. That Mr. Morrison should give two bursaries annually, provided that at least four others were raised.

II. "That the Education Committee be authorised to raise a loan for the erections proposed.

III. "That the Education Committee be instructed to ascertain the practicability of establishing a Ladies' College."

Rev. J. W. Lawson was placed on the list of unattached ministers for appointments from the Home Mission Committee.

Rev. J. Ewence, formerly Baptist, had made application to the Presbytery of Mortlake for admission to the ministry. He was now recommended to accept employment as an ordained missionary of this Church.

It was agreed to establish a Loan Building Fund.

In connection with the business of the Theological Hall, it was proposed that a system of Scholarships should be instituted. It was recommended—

1. "That the Scholarships to be instituted be of two kinds—Literary, to assist aspirants to the ministry to pass through the University curriculum for the degree of M.A.—and Theological, to assist aspirants in passing through the Hall curriculum.

2. "That these Scholarships be granted to students who pass the prescribed examinations, or be gained by competition.

3. "That the fund for these Scholarships be composed of Congregational Collections appointed by the Assembly, benefactions given for some special behoof, and the annual income arising from foundations.

4. "That all funds collected, gifted, or bequeathed for this fund be placed in the hands of the Assembly's Treasurer, and be dispensed by the Theological Committee and the *Senatus* jointly."

The *Senatus* of the Theological Hall recommended that Rev. P. Mercer be appointed to the vacant office among the Professors. Mr. Mercer was accordingly appointed *ad interim* successor to Rev. P. Brown as Professor of Exegetical Theology in the Theological Hall.

As a just tribute to Mr. Brown in vacating his office, it was agreed to put the following on record :—

"The Commission, in accepting the resignation by the Rev. P. Brown of the chair of Biblical Exegetics in the Theological Institute, feel bound to record their high sense of the zeal, learning, and patient assiduity displayed by Mr. Brown in the duties assigned him until failing health compelled his retirement. It adds to their sense of obligation to Mr. Brown that his services were most cheerfully rendered for upwards of five years without any remuneration——that his work was, indeed, a labour of love, for the sake of Him whose glory was his single object and desire — and while now expressing their gratitude to him for his valuable services as a Professor, it is their earnest hope and prayer that it may please the Lord to make his ministry increasingly fruitful, and the closing years of a devoted life full of peace and honour."

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, P.R.N., 13TH JULY, 1869.

REV. P. BROWN, MODERATOR.

This extraordinary meeting of the General Assembly was convened by the Moderator on 25th June, in consequence of a requisition from several of the members of the Assembly, for the

purpose of appointing trustees for the Scotch College reserve, Melbourne.

The Education Committee had taken steps, in accordance with the resolution of the last meeting of the Commission of Assembly, for the extension of the Scotch College premises, when they found it was necessary that instant application should be made to Government for the deed of grant of the Scotch College reserve to enable the Committee to borrow on the security of the property a sum of money with which to effect the extension proposed, and that for this end there should be a new appointment of trustees, to whom the grant should be issued.

Mr. J. C. Stewart, law agent for the Church, read the draft of a deed of grant for the Scotch College reserve, prepared by him under instructions from the Honourable the Commissioner of Public Lands and the Education Committee, describing the arrangements under which the mortgage of the property was proposed. It was shown "that the mortgage should extend simply to the revenue, and that the mortgagee, should he enter on possession, would hold the property subject to the supervision of the General Assembly, and exclusively for the purpose specified in the grant, the revenue only to be attachable by him, and that until the liquidation of his claim."

The trustees who had been appointed provisionally for the Scotch College reserve in November, 1859, were relieved of their trust. The following gentlemen were proposed and appointed, with instruction to have their names submitted to Government for sanction, with the understanding that, in the event of only five being eligible, according to Government regulations, the first five who should accept the appointment would be submitted :—Messrs. John Mathieson, James M'Culloch, James M'Bain, Robert Simson, James Wilson, James Cooper Stewart, William Kerr Thomson, James Balfour, and P. Russell.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 9TH NOVEMBER, 1869.

REV. I. HETHERINGTON, MODERATOR.

Induction—Rev.	D. H. Ballantyne—Brighton and Cheltenham.
,,	,,	A. Morrison—Clunes.
,,	,,	D. Rattray, ordained—Pentland Hills and Blackwood.
,,	,,	W. Munro—Woodend and Newham.
,,	,,	W. B. Hutchison, M.A., ordained—Chiltern.
,,	,,	W. K. Muir, ordained—Elsternwick.
Translation	,,	J. W. Inglis—St. John's Church, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	J. M'L. Abernethy, M.A.—Sandridge.
,,	,,	G. Graham—Beechworth and Stanley.
,,	,,	A. Robb—Albury and Belvoir.
Death	,,	W. K. Muir—Elsternwick. (See page 268.)

The roll embraced one hundred and one ministers.

The items of business numbered forty-five.

It was resolved that a strong recommendation be made to the Committee on the Widows and Orphans' Fund to consider the practicability of increasing the annuities.

In regard to the Infirm Ministers' Fund, it was a subject of regret that ministers of the Church should have taken so little interest in the Fund. Presbyteries were enjoined to appoint local Committees for the promotion of the Fund within their bounds, and also to consider the propriety of making it imperative on all ministers that may be admitted into the Church in future, to make a declaration of their willingness to contribute to this Fund.

In connection with the work of the Home Mission Committee, it was agreed to set apart £300 annually from the fund for the purpose of securing a supply of ministers from the Home Churches, and that a special effort should be put forth to raise this sum, so as not to interfere with the other objects of the fund.

The Assembly adopted a recommendation from the Committee on Aids to Worship in favour of the list of books containing sermons suited for services in the Bush, suggesting that said list be published in the *Christian Review* and *Messenger*, calling attention to the Book of Prayers sanctioned by the Established Church of Scotland as suitable, and drawing attention to the *Preacher*, a periodical issued by the Rev. A. J. Campbell, as fitted to assist in the conducting of devotional exercises in destitute parts of the country.

The Theological Hall Committee received the library of the late Free Church Synod for the benefit of the students—the library and bookcase to remain the property of the Assembly, and the parties at present holding the property to be relieved of all responsibility.

The Assembly rejoiced to hear of the continued progress of the mission to the New Hebrides. In anticipation of the visit of the *Dayspring* to Corio Bay, Geelong, it was hoped that means would be used to deepen the interest, especially of the Sabbath-schools, in the ship and in the mission; also that plans should be laid for enabling Dr. Geddie to visit as many of the congregations of the Church as his stay in the Colony would admit. The Assembly expressed the warm interest which they felt in the welfare of the missionaries and their families, as well as in the advancement of the all-important work to which they were so faithfully devoting their powers. Besides this, the Assembly could not help recording their indignant regret at hearing of the conduct of certain traders in the South Seas towards the natives, and resolved to urge on the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Queensland, the necessity of lifting up an earnest remonstrance against the sanction given by

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MEMORIAL MINUTE.

It was agreed to place on record the Assembly's appreciation of the services rendered to this Church by the late Mr. John Brown, and especially of his services as secretary to the Home Mission Committee. His urbanity of manner, his kind and conciliatory disposition, his sincere and unaffected piety, his readiness to undertake any work that was laid upon him, and his strict attention to duty endeared him to all who had the opportunity of knowing his worth. Animated by a zealous fidelity in maintaining and promoting what he believed to be true and right, always at his post, he was suddenly called away from the work in which he had laboured so diligently to enter on its blissful recompense.

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the Government of their Colony to the inhuman and obnoxious traffic.

Rev. W. Mathew resigned his office as superintendent of the mission to the Chinese.

A very unusual and even extraordinary experience fell to the lot of the Mortlake Presbytery. After all arrangements had been duly made for carrying into effect the settlement of a minister, and after they had met for the purpose, they felt themselves under the necessity of abandoning their purpose, and allowing the pulpit to remain vacant for a time.

A curious illustration was afforded of the peculiar difficulty felt by the Assembly in dealing with the distribution of the State-grant. The State-aid recipients and the non-recipients or voluntaries had come to a verbal understanding at the Union in 1859, that the subject of the Government endowments should never be allowed to intrude on the notice of the Assembly, so that the voluntary members might not be compromised by a tacit consent to what they professedly condemned. At this meeting, in course of the ordinary business, it was moved—"That the Assembly now adjourn, in order that the members interested in the State-aid may meet for its distribution." At once an amendment was proposed—"That the Assembly adjourn." A second amendment was proposed—"That the Assembly resolve itself into Committee for the distribution of the State-aid." The motion was carried, and the mover of the second amendment dissented for reasons to be lodged with the Clerk.

A vigorous agitation had been carried on in the community by public meetings, deputations, lectures, and petitions for the abolition of State-aid. Bills were frequently brought into Parliament for this end, and as often failed to pass the two Houses. A clause in the Constitution Act required that the abolition of grants-in-aid of public worship should not be effected except by an absolute majority of the whole House. This was on several occasions well nigh secured, and now the fierce struggle had extended more or less over a period of about fifteen years. The long-looked-for consummation, eagerly expected by the mass of the community, but strongly deprecated by many, at length, by a sort of general consent, was within sight—was in the near future. Other Colonies had long before stamped out the system. But Victoria, with all her boasted superiority, seemed to cling with peculiar tenacity to the State trammels of the old country—trammels which were uncongenial in the new liberty-breathing atmosphere of the Sunny South.

The Bill, which was expected to deal the death-blow to the obnoxious plan of endowing truth and error alike, was brought into Parliament, and could not fail to arrest the attention more or less of the Assembly. The nature of the Bill, as affecting the interests of the Presbyterian Church, may be gathered from the Assembly's deliverance bearing on the subject.

It was moved—"That the Assembly take into its consideration the propriety of framing a deliverance with regard to the sites reserved by the Government on behalf of the Presbyterian Church

of Victoria, and which it is now proposed by the Legislature to grant to the Church in fee simple."

Following this, it was resolved—"That the Assembly regret the proposal to confer on trustees the right of disposing of the lands which had been reserved for Church purposes, and agree to memorialise the Legislature to that effect."

Consequent on this resolution, the Convener of the Law Committee was instructed to wait on the Chief Secretary, in order to secure the insertion in the Sate-aid Abolition Bill of a clause exempting the sites of the Presbyterian Church from sale, in accordance with the resolution now adopted by the Assembly.

A very important step was taken at this meeting with a view to the extension of the benefits of a superior female education. It had been resolved to consider what arrangements should be made for the establishment of the proposed Ladies' College. A little difficulty was felt as to whether the Principal should be selected from the Home countries, from the Colony, or from whatever part of the world the most eligible person could be obtained to fill the office. After full discussion on the merits of the whole scheme, the following series of resolutions were adopted :—

1. "That the following gentlemen be appointed trustees to hold the property of the College on behalf of the Church :—Messrs. G. Russell, J. Lorimer, J. Mathieson, J. Wilson, W. Armstrong, F. Bell, and D. M'Pherson.

2. "That the objects of the institution be to provide a sound and thorough English education, grounding the pupils in an intelligent acquaintance with the grammar and composition of their native language; to provide instruction in what are termed the various branches of ornamental education; and, in addition to instruction in modern European languages, to communicate a knowledge of natural science in its more popular departments, and in the elements of Latin, and to combine with the above a sound religious instruction.

3. "That the institution be placed under the care of a principal (who must be a married gentleman) and a lady superintendent, who shall both be members of the Presbyterian Church, and that the classes be conducted by the principal, the superintendent, lady assistants, and visiting masters.

4. "That all the teachers, including the Lady Superintendent, be appointed, paid by, and subject to the Principal.

5. "That provision be made, not only for day classes, but also for boarders; the whole to be under the management of the Principal.

6. "That the premises be erected for both the afore-mentioned purposes; the schoolrooms to be commodious, and constructed according to the most approved plans, and the bedrooms to be well-ventilated.

7. "That the moneys needed for these ends be raised by subscriptions, and loans either on mortgage or personal guarantee.

8. "That the institution be not opened until the necessary buildings have been erected.

9. "That the following gentlemen be requested to act as Commissioners to select the Principal of the College:—The Rev. Drs. Charteris, R. Buchanan, Calderwood, and Craik, Rev. J. Oswald Dykes, Mr. J. Sime, and Dr. Donaldson.

10. "That the Principal be appointed for a term not exceeding five years, subject to removal; and that the terms of his engagement be framed on the principle of the institution being self-supporting.

11. "That the daughters of ministers be educated in the institution at cost price."

The deliverance of the Assembly on the subject of public education is worthy of being recorded:—

1. "This Church approves of a national in preference to denominational system of education.

2. "It holds that education should be compulsory.

3. "It holds that all schools should be managed by local boards, in which parents are fully represented.

4. "It can acquiesce in no system of education that excludes religious instruction from being given in the school at extra hours.

5. "It holds that the amount and kind of instruction should be determined by the local boards.

6. "It holds that no child should be required to attend such instruction whose parents object."

With regard to the Bill before Parliament for the Abolition of State-aid, it was found that the Legislative Assembly refused to exempt from its operations the Government sites belonging to the Church, but they had left it to the Governor-in-Council to issue regulations according to which the various denominations should have power to sell or dispose of their Church lands.

In connection with this subject, it was proposed and adopted—"That the Law Committee be instructed to prepare the draft of a model trust deed under which the properties of this Church shall be held; and in the event of the Bill for the Abolition of State-aid being passed, that a copy of the draft be forwarded to the Governor-in-Council, with a view to its adoption, as the regulation affecting the properties of this Church."

A proposition that the Church should take steps with a view to the suppression of intemperance was adopted, and the Committee on Sabbath Observance was instructed "to make this object part of their programme, the Committee to be designated 'the Committee on Sabbath Observance and Public Morality.'"

A very decided movement was made by the Assembly in the direction of evangelistic work throughout the Church. A Standing Committee on the State of Religion was appointed, whose business should be—

"To consider the best means of securing more enlarged and efficient co-operation of the eldership and members of the Church in awakening an interest in vital godliness—to have a portion of the *Christian Review* devoted to the publication of judicious revival intelligence of an awakening character—to invite the various con-

gregations of the Church to join in the general concert of prayer during the first full week of next year—to arrange so that various ministers should preach to congregations, especially those that are partially favoured with the means of grace, which should welcome their services—and to influence Presbyteries to hold conferences on the best means of promoting the spiritual interests of the people."

It was still necessary to maintain a Committee on Union. The minority of the Free Church, which had remained apart for about ten years, was absorbed in the general body two years before. One or two Free Church ministers still held aloof, on account of the extreme views they entertained on the ground of the utter incompatibility with real Free Church principles of any Union which should embrace ministers who were in sympathy and fellowship with the Established Church of Scotland and with those who held the voluntary principle. But the Tasmanian Presbyterian Church were very desirous of Union, should it be found practicable, and were still negotiating with this end in view. Moreover, with the prospect of State-aid being speedily abolished, there was every hope of the United Presbyterian Church becoming amalgamated with the large denomination. Hence the re-appointment of the Committee on Union with other Presbyterians besides those of Tasmania, with instructions to take action as occasion may offer on Union generally.

In considering the report on the Theological Hall, much satisfaction was expressed with the progress made in regard to endowing chairs in theology. Special thanks were given to the Rev. P. S. Menzies, Convener of the Library Committee, and to Mrs. Clow, David Ogilvy, Esq., and George Duncan, Esq., donors of books. The arrangements of last Session, under the Principal, were satisfactory. The Treasurer was instructed to pay the gratuity of £50 to each of the interim professors for the services of the year, but £100 to Rev. P. Mercer, in consideration of extended services. Parents were specially urged to consecrate their sons to God, that some might be qualified for the ministry of the Word.

CHAPTER VI.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—1867-70.

Events of the Four Years till Union.

February, 1867.—A singular case was brought by reference from the Session of Neil-street congregation. A mother and two daughters had applied for admission to the membership of the Church, on condition that, in the observance of the communion, they should be allowed to partake of the bread only. The Presbytery declared that no member of this Church could be allowed to partake of the communion only in one kind.

Rev. James Henderson, labouring at Sebastopol, had sent a letter informing the Presbytery that he had gone to Adelaide on invitation to preach under the sanction of the Presbytery in some of their vacancies; that he had left in December, with the prospect of being absent five or six weeks, but that it was doubtful whether he should return at all. Rev. Messrs. Walker and Dick, at great inconvenience, had endeavoured to give supply of service at Sebastopol in his absence.

April.—Mr. Henderson wrote on 1st March from Adelaide, intimating that, so far as he could learn the leadings of divine Providence, it seemed to be His will that his connection with the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria should cease, and requested that he might be furnished with such documentary testimony of his ministerial status as the Presbytery may deem fit to grant.

June.—A special meeting of Presbytery was held in consequence of a requisition from the Armstrong-street Ebenezer congregation, Ballaarat. They had requested a meeting on the spot in order to visit the congregation, and take its affairs into consideration, with a view to remedy the present difficulties under which they labour.

This case has been to some extent anticipated in the general sketch of Rev. R. T. Walker's career. Inasmuch, however, as the matter referred to should properly be related here, in the order of historical occurrence, it will be necessary to mention some of the details of a case which assumed no small importance in its day. Moreover, the case affords one illustration, among not a few, which in the earlier days of experience in the Church occurred, of the strange turn which affairs took in the management of Christian congregations, while it furnished another strong argument for the amalgamation of all Presbyterians and the consequent increased and beneficial influence of Church Courts.

July.—After patient investigation by the Presbytery, it was found that there were very pressing financial difficulties; that there was a considerable amount of disaffected feeling between parties in the congregation; that, after every effort made by the Presbytery to

apply a remedy, reconciliation and harmonious action seemed impracticable ; that a majority of the congregation were in favour of the termination of the pastorate, while the minority were opposed ; that both parties were at the same time attached to the Denomination ; that, in these painful circumstances, the Presbytery felt obliged to recommend, in the view of separate organisations, that the members on both sides should meet, and if it was absolutely impracticable to remain united, should come to an amicable and equitable arrangement in respect to the Church property, arrears of stipend, and other liabilities.

August.—It was represented, on behalf of the Neil-street congregation, Ballaarat, that they had a favourable offer to purchase the Church land, and that they wished liberty to sell and to transfer the present building to a new and more eligible site in Lydiard-street. The requisite authority was granted.

In reference to the division of the Ebenezer congregation, Ballaarat, and of the Church property, it was found that the total liabilities amounted to £2,274 14s. 3d., and that the two parties agreed to share these in the proportion of their numbers, viz., as 9 to 5, or £1,463 7s. 1d. to the majority, and £812 7s. to the minority. The former should have full and undisturbed possession of the Church and lands, and the latter should have full and undisturbed possession of the manse and grounds.

The minority of fifty-one memorialists, who applied for disjunction, and those who might adhere to them, were disjoined from the Armstrong-street Ebenezer Church, and declared to be a separate congregation in Ballaarat under the ministry of Rev. R. T. Walker, while the pulpit of the major part remaining in Armstrong-street was declared to be vacant.

October.—Reports were received from Ballaarat as to the fulfilment of obligations on the part of the separated congregations in liquidating their respective obligations and the peaceful progress of events. Some difficulty existed in regard to efficient supply for the vacant pulpit. The communion had been observed, and there was a good attendance. Both this and the Geelong pulpit had been satisfactorily supplied.

December.—It was reported that heretofore the vacant pulpit of the Ebenezer congregation had been supplied from local resources, according to previous arrangement. These having become somewhat exhausted, the Clerk had been requested by the Secretary of the Church to send supply from Melbourne. He had arranged to do so on the third Sabbath of this month, but received a telegram on the day before not to send a preacher, because they were irrevocably engaged. It was considered to be very strange procedure on the part of the congregation to seek supply for the pulpit from Melbourne and then to act independently of Presbyterial control. But the Presbytery were astonished and grieved to know that the minister whom the people admitted into the pulpit was one belonging to another denomination, although that would not have been a fault in ordinary circumstances. The minister was one whom

his own congregation had just recently compelled to resign, and had forbidden in a summary manner to enter the pulpit. They had heard an unfavourable report respecting him, and hence their action. Whether the report was true or not, he had at once resigned his charge, and thereby seemed practically to confess that the report was not altogether false. It became a small matter in the eyes of the Presbytery that the friends in Ballaarat had committed an act of official discourtesy. But to find them receiving into the most sacred and responsible office of doing pulpit and pastoral work a minister whom his own congregation had cast out from among them, appeared dishonouring to God, and fitted to bring scandal not only on the Christian, but on the ministerial profession. Remonstrances were addressed to the trustees, elders, and leading members of the congregation, and to the minister himself, who had intruded into forbidden territory while lying unpurged under a serious report, but they made no acknowledgment. The minister never replied.

February, 1868.—A preacher, whom the Clerk of Presbytery had sent from Melbourne, officiated in Ebenezer Church on Sabbath, 5th January, and the Clerk himself conducted service on the 12th, the Sabbath after. At a Session meeting on the evening of the 11th, and at a congregational meeting held on the evening of the 13th, the Clerk presided, and did everything in his power to explain the laws of the Church, and to guard them against unconstitutional courses, but in vain. By an all but unanimous vote the congregation, choosing a chairman of their own, and superseding the presiding representative of the Presbytery, declared themselves in favour of an unpresbyterial and of a simply congregational course of action. In spite of all protests, and in face of the declaration of one of the trustees that this was a United Presbyterian Church by deed of trust, the people, led apparently by one man, an old Congregationalist, threw to the winds their obligations as consistent Presbyterians.

The Clerk, notwithstanding all this, endeavoured to send a preacher to supply on the 19th, but his efforts were superseded. On the 18th an advertisement appeared announcing that the cast-off non-Presbyterian minister, while still uncleared of the evil imputation which was spread far and wide throughout the community, would officiate morning and evening of the 19th in Ebenezer United Presbyterian Church, Armstrong-street.

Not only so, but on the 1st February another announcement appeared in the Press to the effect that the said minister would commence his labours as pastor of the United Presbyterian Church, Armstrong-street, on Sabbath, 2nd February, 1868! Without reference to former occurrences, without the usual forms of induction or recognition when a minister enters on a new charge, without any avowal of the system of doctrine he would teach, he entered, to all appearance without scruple, on the charge of a congregation of Presbyterian Christians, to teach them lessons, of course, on all the graces, private and public, of Christian character! And the people were willing to have it so!

March.—A special meeting of the Presbytery was called in order to receive a petition for a moderation in a call from the congregation of Geelong.

It was reported that Rev. Daniel M'Kenzie, from Scotland, had arrived by the *Great Britain*, s.s., in the middle of last month, with the intention of connecting himself with this Presbytery. From the credentials presented, it appeared that he had been set apart to the pastoral charge of the United Presbyterian congregation of Kinghorn by the Kirkcaldy Presbytery on the 8th April, 1862; that he resigned his pastorate on 5th November, 1867, with the view of emigrating to Victoria; that he was freed from his charge on 3rd December; that the congregation testified their unabated attachment to him, and their deep regret at the loss of his services; and that the Presbytery also expressed their sorrow at parting with him, and their best wishes for his future welfare and his success as a minister of the gospel. Mr. M'Kenzie, being present, received a cordial welcome.

It was further reported that, immediately on his arrival, it was arranged that Mr. M'Kenzie should supply at Geelong. Accordingly he had officiated there the last three Sabbaths, and now the Presbytery were called to deal with a petition for a moderation. There was every prospect of a unanimous call and a satisfactory settlement. The call issued on 19th March in favour of Mr. M'Kenzie. It was signed by one hundred and thirteen members and thirty-four adherents. The call was accepted, and the induction was carried into effect on 9th April.

April.—The Presbytery had still persevered in their efforts to bring the trustees, elders, managers, and people of the Ebenezer Church to retrace their steps, but without any effect. They could only declare their unfeigned sorrow and profound astonishment that, after ordination vows, declarations of trust, property deeds, and other solemn obligations, all binding them to the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria, they should appear to have acted in a manner so much at variance with all these. While professing themselves United Presbyterians they seemed to ignore the rules, which, among other matters, required that no man should be eligible to the ministry other than a preacher or minister belonging to the Body, and yet they elected a minister belonging to a different denomination, who, if faithful to his convictions as a Congregationalist, could not conduct the affairs of the Church according to its Presbyterian character and polity.

October.—Reports were received as to the fulfilment of Presbytery orders for collections on behalf of the Synod Fund.

It was competent for the Presbytery to have taken effective legal steps in the case of the Ebenezer Church. But with the near prospect of Union with the general body of Presbyterians it was deemed best to exercise forbearance.

A Committee had been appointed, consisting of the two ministers of Ballaarat, to inquire into the spiritual destitution of any locality in the city or neighbourhood.

Consultation was held in reference to the propriety of putting forth fresh efforts for the purpose of securing the speedy abolition of State-grants to religious denominations, there being a favourable opportunity apparently presenting itself for renewing the attempt to free Christianity from Government support.

March, 1869.—The long-looked-for day seemed now to be drawing near when the vexed question of State-grants in aid of public worship would be finally settled. The Government had announced their intention to bring in a Bill at an early date for the total abolition of State-aid. All the voluntary associations became alive with new energy. They resolved to use all possible means in order to strengthen the hands of Government, and secure the end of a protracted conflict.

Rev. A. M. Ramsay drew the attention of the Presbytery to the state of his health, which was so infirm that he had not been able to officiate more than once each Sabbath for some time. He stated he would be glad of any assistance the brethren could conveniently give him. All the members of Presbytery expressed their sympathy with Mr. Ramsay in his affliction, and declared their readiness to give him all the help in their power.

July.—It was reported that there had been meetings and conferences among a considerable number of influential ministers and laymen of various denominations who were interested in the subject of abolishing State-endowment of the religious Bodies; that a deputation had waited on the Chief Secretary to ascertain the views of Government, and that the information was obtained that it was their intention to bring in a Bill this Session for the gradual withdrawal of all State-grants. It afforded no small gratification to know that the efforts which had been made during so many years for the emancipation of the Churches from State-support were in prospect of being soon crowned with success. Especially did the Presbytery rejoice at the removal of the great obstacle to their Union with the general Body of Presbyterians becoming ere long an accomplished event.

Mr. Ramsay reported that his health was much in the same condition as it was at the former meeting; that he had not felt fit for more than one service each Lord's day, and that he had taken opportunities of going into the country for rest and change. He expressed his thanks for the assistance which he had received from the brethren of the Presbytery and from other friends, and would be glad, if convenient, to receive further aid.

November.—A meeting of Presbytery was held in Ballaarat because the time of final payments by the two Churches—the one in Armstrong-street and the other under the ministry of Rev. R. T. Walker—had nearly expired. The Ballaarat Building and Investment Society, to which payments by the two parties were due, was being wound up. The presence of the brethren on the spot was needed, in order to take the necessary steps with a view to the settlement of the respective properties according to the deed ratified by the Presbytery.

It was reported that the congregation of Rev. R. T. Walker, after worshipping for some time in the Mechanics' Institute, had purchased land in Doveton-street, with a brick building on it, which was previously used by a Welsh congregation as their place of worship. Mr. Walker's congregation had been worshipping in the new place since the purchase was effected, and it was their desire that it should be known in future as the Doveton-street United Presbyterian Church. An election of Trustees was made by the congregation. These were Robert Thompson Walker, David Ritchie, James Young Allan, Robert Ramsay, William Henderson, John Cairns, and William Jeffrey ; and they were authorised to hold the manse and the Church properties on behalf of the congregation.

It was ascertained that both congregations had made all payments due to the Building Society, whose term of existence had expired. The Presbytery, therefore, took the necessary steps in order that the Trustees of Ebenezer Church property—Messrs. J. W. Gray and D. Turpie—should transfer the manse property occupied by Mr. Walker to the new Trustees, on the conditions specified in the agreement made by both parties with the Presbytery.

Information was given that the Bill for the Abolition of Government-aid to Churches had recently passed in the Legislative Assembly, and there was a probability of its also passing in the Legislative Council. In consequence of this, the prospect of Union with the Presbyterian Assembly was not a distant one. Hence, at the recent meeting of the Assembly, a Committee of correspondence on Union had been appointed. In response to the action of Assembly, the Presbytery agreed to form themselves into a Committee on Union, as many of the members as possible to meet and deliberate with the other Committee as arrangements might require.

In respect to Mr. Ramsay, the Presbytery learned that there was no improvement in the state of his health, that he had been unable even to conduct one service on each Sabbath, and that his affection had assumed a rather serious aspect. The Presbytery renewed their expressions of sympathy and their efforts to render him pulpit assistance, each minister giving him a full day's service in turn.

January, 1870.—The Clerk reported that the Presbytery met to-day in an emergency, and therefore for special business, the Rev. A. M. Ramsay having departed this life on the evening of 31st December. The present was the day (4th) of the funeral. Prayer was offered in the solemn circumstances in which they were met. A Committee was appointed to draw up a minute, to be put on record, of the deep sense they entertained of the loss sustained by the Presbytery and the Denomination in the decease of their brother, and also of condolence with the bereaved wife and family.

The Presbytery agreed to put on record the tribute to the memory of their departed brother which is given below. *

* As a member of Presbytery he was of eminent service in advancing the interests of the Denomination by his clear and decided views of duty, by his conscientiousness, by his long experience, and by his uprightness, candour,

February.—Immediately after Mr. Ramsay's decease, the elders and deacons of St. Enoch's Church instituted a diligent inquiry into the financial condition of the congregation, and into the prospect of their being able to meet liabilities, and at the same time to call a pastor of such decided qualifications as would be likely to contend successfully with the difficulties of the position. The congregation had fallen off considerably during the last few years of the late pastor's failing health. Through a courageous effort put forth a few years before in the erection of the new front and the elegant spire, the property required to be put under a heavy mortgage. The interest of this, added to the ordinary expenses of maintaining gospel ordinances, was, especially with a minister broken down in health, exceedingly crushing. There is always a tendency, too, on the part of a congregation in such afflictive circumstances to take a desponding view of the situation. The darkness of the prospect seemed dense. No minister with courage and talent sufficient to undertake the cause, to inspire the congregation with confidence, and to dispel the gloom, presented himself to view. The only alternative that appeared feasible was the sale of the Church and the breaking up of the congregation. There seemed no possible way of meeting responsibilities and retaining hold of the property. They, therefore, resolved to sell.

To the Presbytery this looked like a calamitous alternative. It appeared as if the honour of the denomination was to be laid in the dust, and as if all its peculiar principles, for which it had contended so long, so vigorously, and at so great a sacrifice, should be held up to view as having failed in practical stability. The deceased minister had stood in the forefront of the battle of voluntaryism. Of a most generous and unselfish spirit himself, he could have no sympathy with ministers who attached a high importance to the support of the State. Having unbounded confidence in the promises of the Master to supply the wants of His servants, he repudiated all engagements with his congregation for a fixed stipend, and would not brook the idea of arrears. And has it come to this, that his stern refusal on principle to participate to the value of a farthing either in money or land doled out by the State should end in a bankrupt Church management, and in an obliteration of the congregation's

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and sincere regard to the glory of God, and to the true prosperity of the Church of Christ. Having been the first minister of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland who preached the gospel in this Colony, and having been instrumental in founding the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria, his memory must long be held in the highest respect. His sound views of the gospel, and his faithfulness in preaching the words of eternal life, his eminent spirituality of mind, his holiness of life, his enlarged Christian sympathies, especially his strong self-denying regard to the interests of suffering humanity in all its varied aspects, and his energies, both of body and mind, devoted to the last so thoroughly, as a patriot, a Christian, and an ambassador of Christ, to the application of the divinely-appointed remedy in the gospel, in order to heal the woes of mankind, all spread a hallowed fragrance around his name. 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.'

existence, instead of its being a standing memorial of his life-work? And the question could not but force itself upon the mind of the denomination: Had it been a wise and right thing after all for the Church to persistently refuse to avail herself of the Government support which had been generously offered—offered without any conditions of interference with spiritual liberty, rather than terminate her labours in catastrophy and humiliation? The outcome of the whole system of voluntaryism, whether in theory or in practice, as exemplified in the sad experience of the Collins-street congregation, seemed fitted to shake their faith in the system, and to revolutionise their views in the matter.

The Trustees, Session, and managers of the Collins-street Church appeared, from the time the vacancy occurred, in order to avoid the responsibilities of a new ministerial settlement, to set themselves to act an independent part. Accordingly, instead of coming at once to the Presbytery to confer with the brethren on their difficulties and plans for the future, they met only with one another, and produced an adverse balance-sheet, as if showing at a glance the necessity of selling the Church property. The trust deed, having been framed before the formation of the Presbytery, gave the Trustees the power of sale. The financial condition was put in the following form by the Church Committee, who brought up a report to a congregational meeting held on the 8th February :—

June 30th, 1861.—At this date the Church was in debt to the late pastor for arrears of stipend and moneys expended on the property	£1,065	0	0
From the above date to 31st December, 1869, due by the Church for stipend, and other moneys expended by Rev. A. M. Ramsay on the Church property	1,535	0	0
Making a total due to Mr. Ramsay of	£2,600	0	0
To mortgage on the Church property	£1,700	0	0
Total liabilities to 31st December, 1869	£4,300	0	0

The Presbytery held a special visitation of the congregation, and inquired, as far as was practicable, into the foundation of these figures. The amount of the mortgage at 8 per cent. was clearly a legal claim. The items which went to make up the total of £2,600, it was found impossible to manipulate. It baffled all the wisdom of the Presbytery to discover a remedy which would prevent the sale. The members were exceedingly anxious to do their best for the congregation, and continued from month to month, at very great inconvenience and no small pecuniary sacrifice, the Church being put to no expense, to give them personally pulpit supply, while the Presbytery carried on negotiations with the office-bearers, and endeavoured to dissuade them from their purpose to dispose of the property.

April.—At length, however, after five months' harassing work on the part of the Presbytery, and while still willing to make further sacrifice, the Session and managers took the supply of service into their own hands.

June.—The Presbytery, having found that they could not get from the office-bearers of the Collins-street Church full information on points affecting her position and interests—that they (the managers) assumed the responsibility of supplying the pulpit; that the counsels which the Presbytery had tendered to the congregation in the interest of all parties were not followed; that the representative elder refused to attend the Presbytery meetings and even repudiated their authority; that the Church property, according to public report, had been offered for sale to other denominations, and that the offer had been accepted by the Church of England—felt that they were under the necessity of issuing their investigations by a series of findings to be recorded in their own defence and published in the press. These, of course, could not be commendatory of the proceedings of the managers and Trustees.

July.—It was reported that the State-aid Abolition Bill had passed both Houses of Parliament by large and absolute majorities on the 5th July, and only waited the Royal assent to make it law. The way, therefore, was opened up, in the good providence of God, for renewing negotiations with a view to Union with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The report afforded great satisfaction. A Committee on Union was appointed, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Walker, M'Kenzie, and Hamilton (Convener), and Mr. J. M. Anderson, with instructions to inquire into—

1. The Basis of Union.
2. Rules and Forms of the Body.
3. The place held among the Standards by the Second Book of Discipline. Why it has been made a Standard or Formula of the Church? What are its peculiarities in distinction from the ordinary Standards of the Presbyterian Church, and whether it would necessarily be binding on them in the event of Union?
4. The rights of property. Whether the number of trustees is fixed and definite? And if so, whether there are any exceptions?
5. The light in which the State-aid money belonging to the United Presbyterian Church would be regarded—whether as belonging to the Assembly or as still belonging to them, and allowed to lapse into the Treasury as heretofore.
6. The form in which the late Free Church entered the Union.

The inquiry into the State-aid money allotted according to their numbers on the census was necessary, because the Abolition Bill allowed the continuation of State-aid to the same amount for the next five years, before its full and final extinction.

It was credibly reported that the Collins-street United Presbyterian Church property had passed by private sale into the hands of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and that an intimation had been made to the congregation from the pulpit last Sabbath (24th) that there would be no further supply of service.

August.—A letter had been received from the Convener of the Union Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria in reply to the queries sent. The letter appeared to the Committee to be of a satisfactory character, and they deemed it advisable to have a

meeting of Synod called as early as possible in order to have the whole subject maturely considered, and, if thought proper, to have the question of Union submitted to the Sessions and congregations of the Church without delay. Accompanying the letter from the other Committee was a copy of the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the Presbyterian Assembly, also a copy of the minutes of last Assembly meeting, containing information in answer to one of their queries

The Union Committee laid before the Synod the letter and accompanying papers, from which it appeared that the basis was substantially the same as this Church had agreed to in former negotiations on Union ; that provision was made in the formula of subscription for those who hold the special view of voluntary Presbyterians respecting the power and duty of the Civil Magistrate in religious matters ; that the Second Book of Discipline, although, in their judgment, superfluous and unnecessary as one of the Standards, presents no serious obstacle to Union ; that congregational property remains in charge of the trustees, and is administered by them in accordance with the constitution of their respective congregations, the number of trustees being optional, except in cases where Government-aid is received ; and that, in regard to State-aid money, in the event of Union, there will be no separate amount reserved for those who belonged to the United Presbyterian Church after the census shall have been taken.

The Synod agreed to express satisfaction with the information laid before them by the Union Committee so far as it went, and to declare that, as there is no real discrepancy between the Standards and Formularies of the two Churches, the same exception being found in the Ordination Formula in regard to the province of the Civil Magistrate in matters of religion which is expressed in the Formula of the United Presbyterian Church—and inasmuch as the Bill for abolishing Government-aid to public worship has passed both Houses of the Legislature by absolute majorities, and may be confidently expected to receive the Royal assent—therefore, the Synod, after full and prayerful deliberation, declare that Union with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria may be accomplished without compromise of principle ; and resolve that the whole question of Union be sent down to the different Sessions and congregations of the Body for their consideration and decision ; that the Clerk be instructed to send copies of the Rules and Forms of Procedure of the Presbyterian Church, which contain the basis of the former Union, so far as it was accomplished, in 1859, to the congregations, with a request that they forward to the Clerk, within four weeks, if possible, their decisions in the matter.

It was further reported to the Synod, as information obtained respecting the views of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, that it was known that State-aid money belonging to the United Presbyterian Church had hitherto lapsed into the General Treasury, and it was believed by some of them that the amount, which had accumulated, at least for a certain number of years, might or could be claimed

at a future time by the United Church ; also, that there was strong probability, if not certainty, that the State-aid Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria should be entitled to claim and use the lapsed money of the United Presbyterians in the interests of the general Body.

The Synod, after deliberation, agreed to instruct the Clerk to make inquiry at the Treasury as to the truth of the report, and whether any arrangement could be entered into with the Government whereby the money should be kept effectually under the control of their own denomination.

It was agreed to prosecute the work of negotiation with the Presbyterian Church, and complete all arrangements with a view to the consummation of the Union in November.

October.—Rev. R. Hamilton was unanimously elected Moderator of Synod.

It was found that the reports from the various congregations on the question of Union were, without exception, in favour of the proposed incorporation, at the same time setting forth that they desired to reserve to themselves full control over their own properties.

After receiving this gratifying report, the Synod appointed the Union Committee to make full inquiry by correspondence with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, with a view to ascertain what control our congregations, in the event of Union with that Body, would have over their ecclesiastical properties.

The Moderator had made inquiry at the Treasury on the subject of the lapsed money, and the control which this denomination would be able to exercise over the amount allotted to them by the census. The sub-treasurer had not heard of any intention on the part of the Assembly's Committee in regard to claiming and using the portion standing in the Treasury books to the credit of the United Presbyterian Church. But the Moderator was not in a position to give any definite information on the subject, because the letter sent by him to the Hon. the Treasurer had not yet been answered.

A memorial from the congregation of the Doveton-street Church, Ballaarat, rather startled the Synod. It requested the Synod to appoint an organ of communication with the Government in order to procure for them whatever portion of the moneys that had accrued, or might still accrue to them, under the 53rd Clause of the Constitution Act, on the ground that the principles for which they had contended so long had been conceded by the Legislature. A member of the congregation was heard in support of the memorial. The minister of Broadmeadows, Rev. D. Chapman, earnestly opposed the petition. The representative elder of Geelong congregation would grant the request, but no one would support his views. The result was to hold the memorial in abeyance.

In explanation of this movement in the direction of accepting Government money, it must be stated that there was some speculation outside the United Presbyterian Church respecting accumulated funds in the Treasury belonging to this voluntary body. It

was imagined that these funds, which had been allowed to lapse during all the years of her history, might be available for the general Presbyterian Church after the Union had been consummated. Imagination lent a marvellous charm to the glittering amount that might be conjured up from the consolidated revenue. What one wishes to be, he very readily believes. The wish is father to the thought. Then the mind feeds on the imagination. There is cherished at the same time a strong reluctance to inquire into facts. Stern realities do not harmonise well with romance. If a little inquiry had been made at the Treasury, it would have revealed the unwelcome truth that moneys lapse into the general revenue when not claimed within the year, and then they are buried without the hope of resurrection.

These dreamy speculations outside the Synod could not fail to awaken its members to the consideration of a subject which otherwise might have lain asleep. But their slumbering energies were awakened to take steps to secure the control of the available money previous to the Union, so that they should not see the general Body, or any portion of it, laying hold of gifts which belonged of right to themselves, but which they heretofore had declined to accept. The United Presbyterian Church of Scotland doubtless contributed in no small measure towards the easy practice of her sons in the matter of State-aid, inasmuch as she encouraged or directed all the ministers she sent to the Colony after 1859, excepting some who were specially "called," to join the State-support receiving denomination. And the outstanding body of the United Presbyterians, who were in a sense sacrificing themselves for the sake of faithfully maintaining her principles, she almost entirely ignored. The result of United Presbyterians joining the State-aided Church, and their coming into close contact with brethren who were helped out of the State Treasury, were thus soon led to see no harm in accepting grants, whether of land or money, attached to which there were no conditions encroaching on spiritual independence. And now, after an experience of about eleven years, the appetite seemed not to have become weaker by indulgence, and some apparently were sorry for the discontinuance of the evil system, looking wistfully at the shadow when the substance was all but gone—dead, and soon to be buried. All this new experience on the one hand, and the complete breaking up of the mother congregation of United Presbyterianism, the sale of the property, and the large arrears for stipend and debts that demanded payment, on the other, had the effect of impressing the body of voluntary Presbyterians in the Colony with the notion that, however well sounding the voluntary principle may be, the practice and its results in their Colonial history had served only to subject them to severe privation, then to expose them to reproach and shame.

November.—The 9th of this month was fixed for the consummation of the long-expected Union. Meeting on the 7th, the Synod agreed to a final minute which should be a summing up of the various reasons and conditions connected with the resolution to

unite with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The minute was as follows :—

"Owing to changes which have recently taken place in the administration of the Government affecting the Churches of this Colony, negotiations were opened anew with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria with a view to an incorporated Union. Accordingly a Committee was appointed to correspond with the Union Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria with special instructions to make inquiry on the following points :—1. The Basis of Union. 2. The Rules and Forms of Procedure. 3. The Second Book of Discipline. 4. The rights of congregations in reference to property. 5. The light in which the State-aid money belonging to the United Presbyterian Church would be regarded by the Assembly in the event of Union, and on any other matter that might be deemed necessary

"After a variety of correspondence and conference, it was ascertained—1. That there is no essential difference in the Standards, Formularies, and Rules of Procedure in the two Churches. 2. That congregational property remains in charge of the Trustees and is administered in accordance with the provisions of their respective trust deeds. 3. That in regard to the State-aid moneys said to be lying to the credit of our Denomination in the Treasury, they would continue to be exclusively under our own control. 4. That after the census our Church, having no separate existence, would have no claim distinct from that of the general Body.

"Having found from these negotiations that Union was practicable, the whole question was remitted to Sessions and congregations, when reports were received from them all favourable to Union without any unnecessary delay. One condition they very generally specified—viz., that they should severally have the full control of their property as heretofore. Whereupon the Synod, after mature deliberation, hereby agree to unite with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, adopting the Standards, Formularies, Rules, and Forms of Procedure of said Church, while declaring that they cannot see the necessity for retaining among them the Second Book of Discipline, stipulating that the congregations retain the management of their own properties, according to their respective trusts ; that the State-aid money alleged to be lying in the Treasury to our credit shall be entirely under our own control, and expressing the hope that the consummation of the Union may tend to the consolidation of our common Presbyterianism, the best interests of the Church of Christ, and the promoting of the glory of our common Lord and Master."

The Synod's Treasurer, Rev. D. Chapman, gave in his report, and received thanks for his past services. It was also unanimously agreed—"That the cordial thanks of the Court be tendered to the Clerk of Presbytery, Rev. R. Hamilton, for the continued diligence and labour manifested by him during the past years in which he has discharged the duties of his office, and for the kind and obliging manner in which he has ever conducted himself in his dealings with his brethren in connection with his official position."

At length, on the evening of 9th November, 1870, the Synod met by arrangement in the lecture room of the Assembly Hall, where the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria were in session. After waiting, a deputation appeared from the Assembly, consisting of Rev. Dr. Cairns and Rev. A. D. Kininmont, and read the following as the deliverance of the Assembly now in session :— "That the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria are now prepared to enter into an incorporated Union with the United Presbyterian Church, and are desirous that the Union should take place immediately."

Having heard the said deliverance, the Synod unanimously agreed to proceed to the Assembly Hall forthwith in order to the consummation of the Union agreed upon by mutual arrangement. The deputation led the way into the presence of the Moderator and Assembly. Rev. Thomas Hastie was called upon by Rev. T. M'Kenzie Fraser, Moderator, to offer prayer. After the devotional exercise, the Clerk of the United Presbyterian Synod read the last minute agreeing to an incorporated Union. The Moderator of Assembly delivered a short address. Then Rev. R. Hamilton, Moderator of the United Presbyterian Church, addressed the Assembly.

After this, the Assembly's Moderator gave the Moderator and members of the United Presbyterian Synod the right hand of fellowship, and the solemn ceremony of Union was brought to a close.

The names of the members of the United Presbyterian Synod were handed to the Clerk of the Assembly, and were enrolled as members of the United Body, while they were allotted to their respective Presbyteries according to the local positions which they occupied. The following were the names :—Rev. Robert Hamilton, and Mr. Joseph Henderson, elder ; Rev. David Chapman, and Mr. James Johnstone, elder—Presbytery of Melbourne ; Rev. Robert Thompson Walker, and Mr. Peter Robertson, elder ; Rev. James Dick—Presbytery of Ballaarat ; Rev. Daniel M'Kenzie, and Mr. J. M. Anderson, elder—Presbytery of Geelong ; Rev. Robert Buchanan Scott and Mr. Neil Clark, elder—Presbytery of Macedon and Werribee.

A number of the other Churches should have been associated with the United Presbyterian Synod in this Union, but having elected to enter the Union in 1859, no hindrance was put in their way. There was one Church, the Ebenezer, Ballaarat, which stood isolated, having broken off from this Synod, and yet they would not unite in 1859 with the general Body. Now, however, the congregation, being without a pastor, applied, by petition direct, for Union with the large Denomination. It was stipulated by the congregation that they should retain full power over their own property after the Union had been effected. After a discussion, and in opposition to a less liberal proposal, it was agreed by a majority that the congregation should be declared a congregation of this Church, and be placed under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Ballaarat.

CHAPTER VII.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR.—1870.

February.—Campbellfield and Epping congregations applied to the Melbourne Presbytery to have Rev. J. Manby located in the district for six months.

A petition, numerously signed by Presbyterians resident in the districts of Tallarook, Seymour, Mangalore, and Tabilk, was presented to the Presbytery, asking that one of their number might be appointed to visit these localities, constitute them a pastoral charge, and thereafter preside at a meeting for the calling of a minister.

March.—The call was signed by ninety members and adherents in favour of Rev. John Cameron. The stipend promised was the minimum, and the induction was duly effected on 15th March.

April.—Mr. Arthur Davidson applied to be taken on trial by the Examining Board with a view to his admission to the Theological Hall. He was admitted in due course.

Mr. J. C. Johnstone, M.A., who had completed his course as a theological student, applied to be taken on trial with a view to his being licensed to preach the gospel.

Mr. Andrew Ross, teacher, Kangaroo Ground, was instructed, in accordance with his application to the Assembly to appear before the Examining Board, with a view to his becoming a missionary in connection with the Church. Upon inquiry, it was found that he had been conducting divine service in the district and at Yarra Flats during a considerable period—that his services were much appreciated, and had been attended with a measure of success; and that he was a man of good natural parts, of blameless conduct, and of much earnestness in the mission-work in which he was engaged.

A call signed by one hundred and forty-seven members and adherents issued from Longwood and Euroa, in favour of Rev. J. Manby, but, after consideration, it was declined.

The attention of the Presbytery was called to an anomalous practice that had crept into the district of Longwood, whereby certain fees were given and taken for the administration of baptism. The Presbytery agreed to put on record their disapprobation of such conduct as altogether contrary to the principles and practice of the Church.

Rev. P. S. Mercer requested the permission of the Presbytery to open a preaching station at Windsor. A Committee was appointed to inquire into the propriety and prospects of such a movement.

May.—Mr. W. Thomson, a student in theology, from the congregation of Rev. A. J. Campbell, Geelong, applied to be taken under the superintendence of the Presbytery of Melbourne.

Rev. D. M'Donald, Emerald Hill, received the honour of Doctor of Divinity from Aberdeen University.

June.—A call was brought out at Campbellfield and Epping unanimously in favour of Rev. J. Manby. The call was signed by eighty members and adherents, and was cordially accepted. The induction was effected on the 20th June.

July.—A call issued from Longwood, Euroa, and Duck Ponds in favour of Mr. Archibald. The call was signed by one hundred and thirty-four members and adherents, but the stipend promised was not up to the minimum.

August.—A call issued from the John Knox congregation, Melbourne, in favour of Rev. A. C. Smith, of Sydney. The call was numerously signed, and the minimum stipend was offered.

A petition was read from the congregation of Chalmers Church, asking the Presbytery to grant a moderation in a call. It was made known that they had sent Home an invitation to Rev. Andrew Cameron, of the Free Church, Maryton, Scotland, to be colleague and successor to Rev. Dr. Cairns. It was ascertained that Mr. Cameron had accepted the invitation sent to him by the congregation; that he was expected to leave Scotland for the Colony about the 23rd of July; and that the people were anxious that he should be settled at as early a date as possible after his arrival. They agreed to grant him a stipend of £800 per annum and a manse.

The inception of a sustentation scheme for the Church took shape, at this stage, in a notice of resolutions by Rev. Dr. Cairns, brought before the Presbytery.

It was, at this time also, that Rev. I. Hetherington gave notice of an important overture to be transmitted to the General Assembly. The overture related to matters of dispute about a portion of the Scotch College site which was occupied by the congregation of Chalmers Church. The congregation asserted a moral, if not a legal, claim to the occupation in virtue of an arrangement made with the Scotch College Committee at an early period to give a part of the Church site in exchange. A discussion took place on the overture, which called forth some feeling in the matter, and showed the danger in some degree of unpleasantness in the Church Courts. The principal clauses in the overture bearing on the critical question were these:—

"And whereas the site of the Scotch College, Melbourne, consisting of allotments 7, 8, 9, etc., of Section 4, East Melbourne, had 'accrued' to the Free Church Synod prior to the Union under an instrument of reservation for education purposes alone, and 'as an equitable right' of the whole Denomination.

"And whereas the said site, consisting of the said allotments, has been subsequently conveyed by Government to trustees, expressly and exclusively for education purposes, and as a site for the Scotch College in connection with this Church.

"And whereas, at the last *pro re nata* meeting of the General Assembly, it was shown that a portion of this site is occupied and used by the Chalmers Church congregation, one of the congregations of this Church, for other than educational and Scotch

College purposes, and is claimed by the said Chalmers Church congregation as pertaining to them on the ground that it had been transferred to them at some former undefined time by a Committee designated the Scotch College Committee.

"And whereas a resolution was carried in the Assembly implying approval of the action of the Committee, and recognising the claim of the Chalmers Church congregation to the said lands, and instructing that means should be taken to have the occupation of it legalised."

The overture further complained of said arrangements as an unwarrantable interference with the right of Trustees and of the Courts of the Church, and as a dangerous precedent, concluding with the request that the Assembly might rescind the resolution of the late *pro re nata* meeting of Assembly, 5th July, 1870.

September.—Attention was called to the recent decease of the Rev. W. Milne, who had laboured with much usefulness and acceptance at Sunbury.*

October.—Rev. A. C. Smith was inducted into the pastoral charge of the congregation of John Knox Church, Melbourne, on 4th October.

Rev. J. Archibald was ordained and inducted into the pastoral charge of the United Congregation at Euroa, Duck Ponds, Violet Town, and Longwood, on 6th October.

On 18th August a unanimous call was given by the congregation of Chalmers Church to Rev. Andrew Cameron, of Maryton, Scotland, now on his way to the Colony.

November.—It was agreed that Oakleigh and Dandenong should be put under the care of the Home Mission Committee.

Mr. F. T. Jenkins having completed his theological studies, applied to be taken on trial for license.

December.—In accordance with a decision of the General Assembly relative to the allocation of the different brethren of the United Presbyterian Church among the Presbyteries of the general Body, at their late meeting in November, it was agreed by the Melbourne Presbytery to add the following names to the roll of their members :—Rev. Robert Hamilton, Napier-street, Fitzroy, and Joseph Henderson, elder; and Rev. David Chapman, of Broadmeadows Church, and J. Johnstone, elder.

Rev. A. Cameron, of Maryton, Scotland, having recently arrived, was cordially welcomed. He accepted the call to the collegiateship of Chalmers Church, and the induction was carried into effect on 20th December.

Application was made on behalf of Mr. Lockhart Morton, jun.,

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* Memorial Minute.

The Presbytery of Melbourne agreed to place on record their deep sorrow for the removal of one who, by his singular amiability of disposition, his consistent Christian deportment, and high-toned personal piety, as well as by his eminent qualifications for the work of the holy ministry, had merited their warmest affection and esteem.

to be received as a student under the superintendence of the Presbytery.

A movement was made at Alexandra and Yea with a view to having a minister settled in the district.

A deputation was appointed to visit Kangaroo Ground, Yarra Flats, and Lilydale, to inquire into the condition and wants of Presbyterians.

Under the authority of the General Assembly, steps were taken with a view to the Union of Bulla and Sunbury congregations under one pastorate.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 3RD MAY, 1870. REV. I. HETHERINGTON, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	J. Cameron—Tallarook, Seymour, Mangalore, and Tabilk.
,,	,,	D. Fraser—Heidelberg and Janefield.
,,	,,	R. J. Allsworth—Penshurst and Caramut.
,,	,,	J. W. Lawson—Portland.
,,	,,	W. Robertson—Trentham and Tylden.
,,	,,	W. M. White—Eaglehawk and Huntly.
Resignation	,,	H. M'Kail—The Richardson.

There were presented ten points for consideration.

Rev. W. Mathew had resigned his office as Superintendent of the Chinese Mission in January last. Mr. Mathew stated, in tendering his resignation, that he had undertaken the office of principal in a college in a distant part of the Colony, to which he was then about to proceed.

The Committee of the Ladies' College had obtained from Government the site for the Ladies' College approved by last Assembly. They had sent by last mail a circular letter to the Commissioners in Britain appointed to select a principal for the College, conveying to them the views of the Assembly. The following is a summary of the instructions of the Committee :—

The resolutions of the Assembly for the establishment of a Ladies' College were :—

1. "That the property of the College should be vested in Trustees appointed by the General Assembly.

2. "That the object of the Institution should be in general to provide a high-class education for young ladies, more especially to furnish sound instruction in English Grammar, Literature, and History ; in the modern European languages, and the elements of Latin ; in all branches of ornamental accomplishments suitable for young ladies, and in the more popular departments of natural science, with paramount attention to moral and religious training.

3. "That the Institution should be placed under the care of a Principal (who must be a married gentleman) and a Lady Superintendent, who should both be members of the Presbyterian Church ; and that the classes should be conducted by the Principal, the Superintendent, lady assistants, and visiting masters.

4. "That all the teachers, including the Lady Superintendent, should be appointed, paid by, and subject to the Principal.

5. "That provision should be made, not only for day classes, but also for boarders, the whole to be under the management of the Principal.

6. "That premises should be erected for both the aforementioned purposes; the schoolrooms to be commodious, and constructed according to the most approved plans, and the bedrooms to be well ventilated.

7. "That the moneys needed for these ends should be raised by subscriptions and loans, either on mortgage or personal guarantee.

8. "That the Institution should not be opened until the necessary buildings had been erected.

9. "That the Rev. Doctors Charteris, R. Buchanan, Calderwood, and Craik, Rev. J. Oswald Dykes, Mr. J. Syme, and Dr. Donaldson should be requested to act as Commissioners to select the Principal of the College. Mr. J. Syme, Convener.

10. "That the Principal should be appointed for a term not exceeding five years, subject to renewal.

11. "That a reduction should be made in the fees charged for the daughters of ministers—to be determined by the Assembly."

The letter stated further—"That the necessary buildings should be erected by the Church; that the whole income should be received by the Principal, who should be responsible for all expenses of management, and should pay as a rent charge to the Church a percentage on the gross income—the percentage to be at the rate of 5 per cent. until the income is £2,000, and thereafter at the rate of 10 per cent., and that the proceeds should be expended in defraying the passage of the Principal and of the Lady Superintendent to the Colony, and in the erection of the necessary buildings."

Attention was steadily kept awake at all meetings of Commission and Assembly to the interests of public morality, more especially in reference to intemperance and Sabbath observance.

The formation of an efficient Sustentation scheme continued to engage the earnest attention of the Church.

The Chinese Superintendent having resigned, it was agreed to correspond with missionaries in China, with the view of obtaining the services of a Superintendent for the Chinese Mission in this Colony.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, P.R.N., 5TH JULY, 1870. REV. I. HETHERINGTON, MODERATOR.

There were three points of urgent business demanding an extraordinary meeting of the Assembly. One was relative to the Scotch College. Another referred to the purchase of St. Enoch's Church, Collins-street, Melbourne. And the third had respect to a proposal from the Board of Management of the Scots Church, Melbourne, offering, in the erection of their new Church, to erect it as an Assembly Church.

In regard to the Scotch College question, the Education Committee could not recognise the moral right of the congregation of Chalmers Church to any portion of the College site. An appeal

was taken against this decision to the General Assembly by Mr. James Balfour, a member of Committee. To delay a settlement of the question, however, till November would have operated injuriously to the interests of the College, hence the *pro re nata* meeting of the Assembly and the withdrawal of the appeal. After a full and animated discussion of the whole subject, the resolution which was carried over several other proposals was to the effect—

"That whereas the allotment No. 7, now occupied as a garden in connection with Chalmers Church, is included in the original grant of land for Scotch College purposes, and is legally held by the trustees of the College accordingly; that whereas at the same time the allotment in question has been in undisturbed occupancy by the congregation of Chalmers Church for the past twelve years: and whereas there is evidence to show that an agreement had been come to and did exist to the effect that No. 15 belonging to Chalmers Church should be exchanged for No. 7 as belonging to the College, the Assembly find that the congregation of Chalmers Church has a claim to the continued possession of said allotment."

Consequent on this resolution having been carried, it was then moved and agreed to—

"That the Assembly instruct that the plans for the extension of the College be carefully re-considered with the view of ascertaining whether any or what portion of allotment No. 7 is indispensable to such extension; and that the Education Committee and the Committee of Chalmers Church be instructed to make thereafter, amicably, such a division of such allotments Nos. 7 and 15 as may be necessary to this end; and that, further, in the event of their being unable to agree to such divisions, they be empowered to appoint arbitrators, whose decision shall be final, and that they thereupon take the necessary steps to have the arrangements so adopted duly legalised."

Next, it was unanimously agreed to, on the motion of the Law Agent—"That, for the purpose of erecting additional and other buildings on the lands and premises now held on behalf of, and in trust for, the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, by the Honourable Sir James M'Culloch, Knight, the Honourable Robert Simson, John Mathieson, James M'Bain, and James Wilson, as such Trustees, to raise by mortgage of the said land and the buildings thereon the sum of £6,000 for the term of five years from the date of the loan, at the rate of interest not to exceed eight pounds per centum per annum, to be paid quarterly; and for the purpose of securing the repayment of the said sum, and the interest thereof, to give to the person or persons advancing the said sum of £6,000 such mortgage of the said land and buildings as the said trustees may think fit; and, further, that the law agent be instructed not to complete the mortgage until the result of the arbitration referred to in the minute of the previous sederunt had been communicated to him."

On the subject of purchasing St. Enoch's Church for an Assembly Hall, a petition was presented from certain members and adherents

of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, proposing to purchase St. Enoch's Church on behalf of the Assembly, and offering the sum of £750 towards the purchase on condition that the purchase should be accepted and paid for by the Assembly within twelve months.

It was resolved—"That the proposal submitted by the petition be cordially entertained; and they be empowered to purchase St. Enoch's Church on the terms offered, on behalf of the General Assembly; and that a Committee be appointed to co-operate with the petitioners in raising the necessary funds within the specified time."

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 8TH NOVEMBER, 1870. REV. T. M. FRASER, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	J. Manby—Campbellfield and Epping.
,,	,,	A. C. Smith—John Knox Church, Melbourne.
,,	,,	J. Archibald—Euroa, Duck Ponds, Violet Town, and Longwood.
,,	,,	C. J. Cameron—St. Andrew's Church, Geelong.
,,	,,	H. B. Giles—Winchelsea and Birregurra.
,,	,,	J. Caldwell—Maryborough.
,,	,,	J. U. Taylor—Maldon and Baringhup.
,,	,,	J. W. M'Cutchan—Sebastopol.
,,	,,	S. Fraser, M.A., ordained—Terang.
,,	,,	W. Mathew—Bright.
,,	,,	G. Tait, M.A.—Richardson and Avoca.
Resignation	,,	J. Scott—Bacchus Marsh.
,,	,,	G. C. Minty—Newstead.

There were now one hundred and fifteen ministers on the roll, and they were embraced in nine Presbyteries. With the accession of the United Presbyterian ministers, who were joined in Union at this Assembly meeting, the number amounted to one hundred and twenty-one.

The items of business in the programme to be discussed at this Assembly were forty in number.

It was announced at the beginning of proceedings that of the £4,400 required for the purchase of St. Enoch's Church, Collins-street, as an Assembly Hall, £1,215 had been subscribed, and £500 had been paid. There was encouragement to hope that the remainder of the price of the hall would be collected before the 1st July next. At this date, according to the terms of the purpose, the money required to be paid.

A motion was at once adopted to meet in the new Hall on the following day.

There was an earnest effort to establish an Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, and a Standing Committee was appointed to work it out. The Church, however, was already taxed for the maintenance of the Widows and Ophans' Fund. And it was not without difficulty that the aged and infirm ministers, who were beginning in the young Church to make their appearance, could be provided for. Rev. T. M. Fraser was the Convener, and he laboured hard to get the fund to a capital of £5,000, in order that the interest accruing might be available for annuities. It required also time and skill to frame a set of rules and conditions connected with the administra-

tion of the fund which would command the general acceptance of the Church. At this meeting of Assembly the fund was a considerable distance from the minimum capital and interest aimed at. There was a general agreement among the members that, in order to have an interest in the fund, each minister must pay £5 each year for five years, and that no minister could become an annuitant unless he had laboured five years as an ordained minister in the service of the Church. It was also regarded as necessary that the congregations of the Church should give an annual collection to the fund. A rule was adopted to the effect that "any minister who fails for three years from the date of his induction to become a ratepayer is precluded thereafter from admission to an interest in the fund, and any minister who allows his payment of rates to fall into arrears to the amount of £10 ceases to have any interest in the fund." This, however, was only to be an interim law till the Church was consulted in the usual way.

At next meeting of General Assembly the interim authority was changed into a permanent law, with the proviso—"That three months' notice be given to ratepayers (fallen into arrears) before their interest in the fund should cease." In 1873 it was further agreed that there be a graduated scale of payments, according to the years of service above five years.

Rev. A. D. Kininmont, Convener of the Committee on Union, reported—"That the Committee had recently received from the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria official notice of their desire to renew negotiations with the Church, with a view to Union, and of their appointment of a Committee to correspond with the Union Committee of this Church for the furtherance of this object; that the result of the Conference of the Committees had been mutually satisfactory; that the United Presbyterian Synod were prepared to unite with them on the basis of Union which the Church had adopted; and that as all necessary arrangements for Union were made, the Committee recommended that the Assembly should proceed now to its consummation."

It was made known that the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church were now in the lecture room connected with the Assembly Hall. A deputation, consisting of Rev. A. D. Kininmont and Rev. Dr. Cairns, were appointed to wait on them and communicate the resolution just adopted. Forthwith there appeared before the Assembly the following members of the United Presbyterian Synod of Victoria:—Rev. Robert Hamilton, Rev. Daniel M'Kenzie, Rev. Robert Thomson Walker, Rev. David Chapman, Rev. James Dick, Rev. Robert Buchanan Scott, and Messrs. J. M. Anderson and Joseph Henderson, elders. Thus the Union, so long expected, was carried into effect. (A detailed account is given in the record of proceedings of the United Presbyterian Synod—see page 291.)

At this meeting the principle of a Sustentation Fund was affirmed, meaning thereby a fund from which all the ministers of this Church should receive a minimum stipend.

On the subject of the Missions to the Chinese and Aborigines,

after hearing the report from the Convener, Rev. George Mackie, it was resolved to instruct the Committee to look out for a European superintendent—a man of experience, and able to speak the Chinese language—and recommend that a heartier liberality be exercised in the support of the mission.

In connection with the New Hebrides Mission, the Assembly rejoiced at the progress of the work of God in the New Hebrides Islands, agreed to employ additional missionaries on the group, as far as men and means may be placed at their disposal, and authorised any balance to be placed to the credit of the *Dayspring* Maintenance Fund.

An encouraging report was made of the progress and prospects of the Theological Hall. The Endowment Fund had prospered, and a sufficient amount had been subscribed to secure the endowment of the first chair of Theology. Mrs. Elder, sen., of Kurruc, had generously bestowed a scholarship of £30 on one of the students of the Hall. Moreover, one of the members of this Church had resolved to found an Exhibition for theological students, and to invest £1,000 for that purpose.

A theological library was being formed for the benefit of the students attending the hall, and Rev. Dr. Cairns, the Principal, made a gift of nearly a thousand volumes, comprising a collection of theological, philosophical, and literary works of great variety and value.

This important institution of the hall was commended to the interest, liberality, and prayers of the people. Ministers were instructed to give it prominence before the congregations, and to press upon parents the duty of consecrating their sons to God, and of beseeching Him to choose and qualify such of them as He sees meet for the ministry of the Word.

The State of Religion Committee became one of the Standing Committees of the Church. It had been agreed to divide the Church into districts, and to appoint ministers to visit Presbyteries and give addresses of a specially impressive and reviving character. Rev. D. S. M'Eachran, who moved the Assembly in the matter of evangelistic work, was appointed Convener. At this Assembly an encouraging report was given, and the Committee were appointed to prosecute their work, and if possible on a more extensive scale, while Presbyterians were instructed to hold special meetings for Conference on the State of Religion within their bounds in the month of April next.

A petition from the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, and another from that of Erskine Church, Melbourne, for authority to sell portions of their Church land, proved the occasion of an important deliverance on the subject. The matter was referred to the next Assembly. The decision arrived at was:—

1. "That where land is held in connection with a congregation, the trustees shall take no steps with a view to the disposal of the land till they are asked to do so by the congregation.

2. "That all applications from congregations to dispose of any

portion of their land shall be laid in the first instance before the Presbytery, and shall be transmitted by the Presbytery, with their remarks thereon, to the Assembly.

3. "That the Assembly, in granting applications, reserves to itself the right of declaring the proportions in which, and the purposes to which, the proceeds are to be applied, primary regard being had in each instance to the claims of the congregation."

An important movement was made in the Assembly for the establishment of a Loan Fund. Various overtures were presented on the subject. The idea suggested was that the State-grant in aid of Public Worship should be consolidated towards this end. There was the term of five years of grace in prospect, during which the different denominations had the opportunity of preparing for the final cessation. It was agreed, in order to the maturing of a Loan Fund scheme, the principle of which was approved, to remit the subject to the brethren who were recipients of the State-grant, with power to dispose of the question finally.

The resolution adopted afterwards was—"That the building portion of the grant, extending over five years, should henceforth be capitalised as the basis of a Building Loan Fund, and be lent out to congregations, free of interest, to be repaid in equal annual instalments within ten years, the trustees of the borrowing congregation to sign a bond to that effect."

This proposal was subsequently amended, so as to give congregations the option of either paying five per cent. per annum on the sum borrowed, in which case the capital sum would be a debt, or of paying ten per cent. per annum, and at the end of ten years the capital would be all paid, thus making the fund reproductive.

Another important step was taken with reference to the formation of a Sustentation Fund. A Committee had been appointed to consider the best scheme for securing the object in view. After full consideration of the whole subject, they recommended the Assembly meanwhile to adopt the following deliverance:—"In view of the abolition of State-aid, and of the growing spiritual wants of the Colony, the General Assembly resolve—1. 'That a fund be formed for the better support of the ministry, and the extension of the Church.' 2. 'That a Sustentation Fund, arranged so as to suit the circumstances of the Colony, and not to injure the stipends which any ministers at present receive, would be the best way of gaining the end.' 3. 'That, where practicable, a staff of collectors be appointed in every congregation, for the purpose of taking up at stated times the free-will offerings of the people for the fund.'"

It was agreed to have a scheme prepared in accordance with these views, with suggestions made as to how the scheme should be constructed and managed.

A safeguard was provided for the calling of *pro re nata* meetings of Assembly. It was resolved that such meetings should not be called except on a requisition signed by twenty members of Assembly, among whom there should be representatives of at least four of the Presbyteries of the Church.

A petition was presented from George Russell, Esq., Golf Hill, and sixty-nine other members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, against the claim of the congregation of Chalmers Church, Melbourne, to a portion of the site of the Scotch College. Its adoption was not carried, but it was declared that the decision of the *pro re nata* meeting in the case was not final until the arrangements recommended by it were duly legalised. In connection with this much agitated subject it was agreed that an Act of Parliament was essential to legalise the proposed exchange of portions of the Chalmers Church and Scotch College sites, and measures were taken to prepare a Bill and prosecute the same to the end. Consequent on the passing of the Bill, the Trustees of the Scotch College were a second time authorised to raise by mortgage on the security of the College lands and buildings, £6,000 and interest. Steps also were directed to be taken for the protection of the gentlemen who were responsible for the debt of £2,000 due on account of the Scotch College.

An inquiry was instituted to ascertain the position of the headmaster and the other masters of the Scotch College, Melbourne, and on what terms their appointments were held. The result was the following :—

1. "That the Principal of the College holds his office under the direction, jurisdiction, and control, in all respects, of the General Assembly of this Church.

2. "That the Assembly's Educational Committee have the supervision of all arrangements, educational and otherwise, of the Institution.

3. "That Mr. Morrison at present pays 10 per cent. on the gross revenue of the College, and will, from the date of the completion of the proposed mortgage for the extension of the College buildings, pay 12½ per cent., the same to be paid quarterly to the Assembly's Treasurer, and all amounts chargeable thereon to be paid by order of the Committee alone.

4. "That after the erection of the buildings Mr. Morrison will receive the sons of ministers as boarders in the proportion of not less than one to eight, at the rate of £42 per annum, which will cover all charges, and the sons of all ministers as day pupils at half of the ordinary rates."

It was arranged that an agreement embodying these terms should be signed by the Convener of the Educational Committee on the one part and by Mr. Morrison on the other part. With regard to the assistant teachers, it was found that they were engaged by the Principal for fixed periods, the longest period being twelve months.

It was agreed "to appoint the Rev. P. Mercer Secretary and Agent for the Home Mission Committee, at a salary of £100 per annum; that he should act as Secretary of the Missions to the Heathen, for which he should receive a further salary of £50 per annum; that he should render clerical assistance to other Assembly Committees, for which he should receive an allowance of £20 per

annum ; and that he should have the use of the house formerly occupied as St. Enoch's manse, with the addition of two rooms."

In regard to the Theological Hall, satisfactory progress had been made with the Endowment Fund. A sufficient amount had been subscribed to secure the endowment of the first chair of Theology, and an earnest resolution was formed to proceed with the effort to obtain the means of endowing the second professorship. Special thanks were given to Mrs. Elder, sen., of Kurruc, for the scholarship of £30 paid to one of the students of the Hall. Great gratification, too, was experienced on learning that it was the intention of a member of the Church to found an Exhibition for theological students, and to invest £1,000 for that purpose. Thanks were recorded to donors of books to the library, especially to the Principal, Rev. Dr. Cairns. Deep obligations were expressed to the Principal for his continued labours, which were so well fitted to confer lasting benefits on the future ministry of the Church.

The Assembly resolved to raise their voice by petition against a Bill brought into Parliament for the purpose of legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

A Conference had been held between the Presbytery of Melbourne and the Presbytery of Macedon and Werribee, on the subject of uniting the congregations of Bulla and Sunbury.

The Committee on the State of Religion had an encouraging report to present, and they were instructed to prosecute, if possible, on a more extended scale, the work which had been begun with such encouraging success ; and the Presbyteries were enjoined to hold Conferences on the State of Religion in the month of April.

The Assembly agreed to memoralise the directors of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company for the suppression of certain forms of Sabbath desecration connected with their traffic —to petition both Houses of Parliament in favour of the Wines and Spirits Bill, especially of the clause prohibiting traffic on the Sabbath —to recommend all the congregations of the Church to send up memorials to the same effect—to instruct ministers to bring the subject of intemperance before the congregations prior to the next general election—to give due prominence to Sabbath observance, family religion, and intemperance during the months of December and January next before their congregations—and to authorise the Committee to wait on the Government to urge the restriction of telegraphic communication on the Lord's Day.

In order to secure that the various funds of the Church should not suffer, if possible, by neglect, definite times were fixed for the congregations making the collections at suitable intervals—For the Heathen Missions, in January ; for the Widows and Orphans' Fund, in April ; for the Home Mission Fund, in June and July ; and for the Infirm Ministers' Fund in September.

Events of the Year—1871.

January.—Rev. Alexander Wither applied to the Melbourne Presbytery for a certificate, because he was about to leave the

Colony for the Home country. It was agreed to give him a testimonial of character and standing, seeing he had been labouring for some time as an unattached minister within their bounds.

Rev. Lindsay Mackie, licentiate of the Free Church of Scotland, was introduced to the Presbytery. He had recently arrived. He presented the usual credentials, and had been admitted into the Church by the Home Mission Committee. In anticipation of Mr. Mackie's arrival, the congregation of Elsternwick had brought out a call in his favour. The call had been sustained, and being now presented, he accepted. After the usual ordination trials, the services of ordination were conducted in the Elsternwick Church on the evening of 31st January.

February.—Rev. David Chapman, Broadmeadows, having resigned his charge, the congregation agreed to declare their deep regret at losing his ministrations, but felt constrained in view of the circumstances of the district, and by a regard to Mr. Chapman's own welfare, to acquiesce in his resignation. The Presbytery agreed to put on record their high appreciation of his laborious, faithful, and lengthened ministry in Broadmeadows, and their sense of the disinterested and considerate regard which he showed to the general interests of the Church in the step which he had taken.

In connection with the vacancy of the Broadmeadows pulpit, it was requested that the Presbytery should take steps to make the two vacant congregations of Bulla and Broadmeadows one pastoral charge, the vacancy of the former being a pending event.

A deputation had been appointed to visit Lilydale, Yarra Flats, and Kangaroo Ground, and the result of their inquiry was that a preacher was forthwith sent to occupy the field, the three districts having encouraged the prospect of the minimum stipend being given to a settled minister.

Rev. J. Hampshire resigned his charge of Footscray congregation.

March.—Leave of absence was granted to Rev. C. Moir, of St. Kilda, for twelve months, to visit Europe, under medical advice, on account of his wife's health.

April.—Messrs. Scott, Chadwick, Lindsay, Wilson, and Rev. R. Hamilton were appointed trustees to hold the new property in connection with the Napier-street congregation, Fitzroy.

May.—Messrs. W. Thomson, and W. L. Morton, students, were examined with a view to their admission to the Theological Hall.

Messrs. James M'Bain, James Lawrence, and John Sharp were appointed trustees of Chalmers Church in the room of Messrs. Bramwell and Connell, who had left the colony, and of Mr. Oswald, who is not now in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The trustees appointed to hold the property in connection with the Church at Heidelberg were Messrs. John Donaldson, James Barrows, John Smith, David Smith, and Hugh Kerr.

Rev. A. Cameron, St. Kilda received from the most distinguished Theological Institute in America the honorary title of Doctor of Divinity.

June.—A unanimous call, from the congregations of Kangaroo Ground and Lilydale, was given to Rev. Alexander Mackie. The call was sustained and accepted. The induction was carried into effect at Kangaroo Ground on 20th, and a welcome service was conducted at Lilydale on 21st.

July.—It was announced that a Conference on the State of Religion had been held on the previous evening in the Assembly Hall, and that another would be held about a month hence.

In consequence of the feeble health of Rev. P. Brown, Hawthorn, it was arranged that steps should be taken to secure a colleague and successor. Satisfactory arrangements having been made, a call was brought out unanimously in favour of Rev. James Patten, M.A., the retiring minister concurring. The call was numerously signed, and when presented was cordially accepted. The induction and settlement took place on the 18th.

A call issued from Yea and Alexandra in favour of Rev. J. Cameron, but was respectfully declined.

September.—The decease of Rev. P. Brown, of Hawthorn, was announced.*

Messrs. John Finlay, William Ireland, and James Gray were appointed trustees of the Dorcas-street congregation to hold their Church property in place of Messrs. Thomas Mouatt, now absent from the Colony, David Stuart, deceased, and James U. Russell, removed from the Colony.

October.—It was announced that the sorrowful news had arrived by last mail of the decease of David Ogilvy, Esq.†

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* Memorial Minute.

The Presbytery resolved to put on record an expression of the high estimate entertained of his character by his brethren, and the affectionate regard cherished towards him by those who had the privilege of knowing him. Endowed naturally with good abilities, he had cultivated these assiduously and faithfully, and had become eminently fitted for the prosecution of his honourable work. As a scholar he had acquired an extensive acquaintance with sacred lore, as a theologian his views of divine truth were perspicuous, comprehensive, and sound. As a member of Presbytery, he was wise in counsel, respectful and considerate towards his brethren, and conscientious in his attendance on the Courts of the Church; and as a preacher he was instructive, earnest, faithful, and practical, presenting the truth with much simplicity and clearness, and, in all, seeking to win souls to Christ. The Presbytery would express their sense of the deep indebtedness of the Church to Mr. Brown for his earnest and self-denying labours in training candidates for the ministry in connection with the Theological Hall. A goodly age was granted to our beloved father, and the memory of his unusually lengthened ministerial career, characterised as it was by unostentatious piety, consistency, and blamelessness of character, amiability of disposition, and devotedness to his Master's service, will be long cherished by not a few alike in the Colony and in the land of his nativity. As his life was gentle, so his end was peaceful. His physical powers gradually sunk in decay, till the voice of his Master called him, and he went home to his rest and his reward.

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†Memorial Minute.

Another sad loss to the Church was sustained by the death of David Ogilvy, Esq., who was one of the early colonists. He died in London on 17th July last. He was an elder in Chalmers Church. He had spent upwards of

Trustees appointed to hold the property of the Richmond congregation were Henry Shillinglaw, Joseph Alexander, and John Omand.

It was agreed to prepare and circulate among the members of the Church a pastoral letter on the advantages of keeping the Sabbath as a day of sacred rest. A Committee was appointed to do this duty, of which Rev. P. S. Menzies was Convener, afterwards Rev. Dr. Cameron; and also to address a memorial to the Chief Secretary of the Colony relative to the Sabbath question.

Rev. A. M'Nicol resigned his charge of the congregations of Donnybrook and Wallan Wallan. The Presbytery accepted his resignation with regret and sympathy.

November.—Intelligence was received respecting the murder of Bishop Pattison, Church of England Melanesian Missionary, at Santa Cruz, in the South Seas, by wild natives. A profound impression was produced on the Presbytery, and they agreed to put on record a simple memorial.*

Rev. Daniel M'Kenzie, of Ryrie-street, Geelong, had received a call from the congregation at Footscray, and having accepted, he was freed from his charge, and was duly settled in the new locality. The induction was effected on 5th December.

Messrs. William Campbell, James Blackwood, and James Lorimer were appointed Trustees of the Scots Church, Collins-street, in the room of Messrs. Donald Kennedy, Patrick Turnbull, and James Stewart, deceased.

Rev. Robert Hamilton was appointed to undertake the weekly service at the gaol. The appointment to be intimated to the Government.

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thirty years in the Colony, following his vocation as a solicitor. He commended himself to the respect and confidence of his fellow men by his integrity in business, and by the exemplary prudence and excellence of his life. He was distinguished by a benevolence that never grudged either money or labour, and he took an active part in founding and in carrying on many of our charitable institutions. As an office-bearer in the Church, his conduct was worthy of all praise. His daily walk and conversation were becoming the gospel, and adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour. 'In simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, he had his conversation in the world.' His donations to the funds of the Church were large and continuous. No one, it is believed, contributed to the building of so many manses and churches as he did, and his subscriptions were as generous in amount as they were freely given. His whole life was a bright example of the character which reflects most brightly the likeness of the Lord.

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* They would express their high estimate of the Bishop's character, of his courage, humility and zeal, in the work of evangelisation, and of the eminent success which had attended his self-denying labours for the conversion of the natives of Western Polynesia. They recorded at the same time their conviction that this deed of blood would not have been perpetrated but for the traffic in human beings now so widely prevailing in the South Seas. Of this illegal work they expressed their unmitigated horror, and hoped that the crisis that had occurred would lead to measures by the Imperial authorities which would effectually suppress the disgraceful practice.

Mr. D. M'Donald, student in theology, having undergone all the necessary preparatory examinations and trials, was licensed to preach the everlasting gospel. His intention was to devote himself to mission work in the New Hebrides, under the supervision of this Church.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, May, 1871. Rev. I. Hetherington, Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	Lindsay Mackie, ordained—Elsternwick.
,,	,,	A. Cameron, collegiate—Chalmers Church, Melbourne.
Resignation	,,	David Chapman—Broadmeadows.
,,	,,	J. F. Hill—Meredith, Lethbridge, and Steiglitz.
,,	,,	A. Mackie—Echuca.
,,	,,	D. Galloway—Piggoreet and Staffordshire Reef.

There were thirteen items of business presented.

The Trustees of Erskine Church, Carlton, were empowered to sell a portion of their Church land, having a frontage of 160 feet to Carlton Gardens, and a depth of 165 feet to Grattan-street, retaining 104 feet or thereby to Carlton Gardens, and 165 feet to Grattan-street; the proceeds to be applied to the erection of a Church, manse, and school, according to plans submitted at last General Assembly.

A considerable effort continued to be made to elaborate a sustentation scheme, but not a little difficulty was felt in agreeing on a plan of operation.

Considerable time was occupied in discussing a variety of important topics, such as the status of candidates for the ministry, who had partially prosecuted their studies at the halls of other Presbyterian Churches; the powers and duties of trustees; and the ever-burning question of Public Education. Two systems of education hitherto had been maintained—one Denominational, and the other National. There was a universal agreement, except among the Roman Catholics, that the dual system should be abolished. The difficulty was to find in their stead a system which would satisfy all parties. It was no easy matter for the Legislature to frame a plan which should secure the education of the entire population in the elements of secular training without ignoring the intense desire of the Denominations to have religious instruction imparted as an essential part of school work.

The Presbyterian Assembly at this Commission expressed their adherence to their former declaration, "that it can acquiesce in no system of education that excludes religious instruction, and that in order to prevent the rights of parents being ignored, in regard to the elementary instruction which they may desire their children to receive, the local committees should be enjoined, before proceeding to the appointment of teachers, to ascertain the views and wishes of the parents on this subject, so that the teachers appointed may be prepared to give, not only the secular education which the Government demand, but, in addition to this, the elementary

religious instruction of which the parents approve." A declaration was also made in favour both of a compulsory and of a conscience clause.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, November, 1871. Rev. George Mackie, Moderator.

Since the meeting in May there had been two demissions, &c.

Resignation	Rev. J. Low	Guildford and Fryerstown.
,,	,, A. M'Nicol	Donnybrook and Wallan Wallan.
Induction	,, J. C. Johnstone, M.A., ordained	Echuca
,,	,, A. Mackie, ordained	Lilydale, Kangaroo Ground, and Yarra Flats.
Death	,, Peter Brown	Hawthorn.
,,	Mr. David Ogilvy, elder	Chalmers Church.

The names of one hundred and fifteen ministers were on the roll.

Special minutes were agreed upon, recording the deep sorrow felt at the removal of the two esteemed brethren, whose decease had been announced, and expressing at length their high appreciation both of the character and the services of these departed servants of Christ.

Authority was given to the Trustees of St. Andrew's Church, Carlton, to sell portions of their Church land fronting both Drummond and Rathdown streets, on the understanding that the proceeds of the sale are likely to be about £1,600, and the cost of the enlargement and repairs about £2,500.

The Trustees of the Church property in Richmond were authorised to sell a portion of the land, on the understanding that £400 of the proceeds go to repay the outlay in connection with the purchase of the site on which the present Church is erected, and that the rest is to be devoted to purchasing a site for a manse and aiding in its erection ; but it may be used as a loan for the reduction of the mortgage at present resting on the Church until the congregation are in circumstances to build a manse.

Permission was granted to the Trustees of the South Yarra Church property to mortgage it to the extent of £3,000, for the purpose of paying off the debt on the Church, building a manse, and completing the church by erecting a vestry, &c.

Liberty was given to the members and adherents of the congregation, Warrnambool, to sell the whole or a portion of the present Church site, when another eligible site should be secured, and with the view of appropriating the proceeds of the sale to the erection of a new Church and other necessary buildings for the use of the congregation. The present site on which the Church was built was purchased by the Trustees for the congregation in 1855. Since the Union a small grant was received for its improvement. The present building was not sufficient for the accommodation of the increasing congregation, and besides this, for various reasons, was unsuitable. It was believed that the land on which the Church stood was of very considerable value for commercial purposes.

The Skipton congregation, in the Presbytery of Ballaarat, obtained leave to sell their place of worship, with the view of building a new one. The present site was the gift of a private individual, and the congregation never received any Government money in aid of the erection of the present Church. The Presbytery had given their sanction.

The congregation at Dunolly, in the Presbytery of Castlemaine, were authorised to mortgage their manse to the extent of £200, in order to meet certain urgent claims which were pressing heavily and injuriously on their resources.

An application was granted to mortgage the Church property at Sebastopol to the extent of £60.

It was provided that the money obtained through sales or mortgages should be placed in the hands of the Treasurer of the Church until they can be applied to the purposes specified in the terms of the permission to sell or mortgage, and that a commission of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. be charged on the proceeds of sales to aid in defraying Assembly expenses.

An application was made on behalf of the common school, Shelford, for an authority to transfer the school property to the Board of Education. The Presbytery of Geelong recommended the transfer, and liberty was granted.

Similar applications were made to transfer to the Board of Education the school property at East Bellarine, Irrewillipe, and Clarendon, and the authority was granted.

It was agreed, in connection with the report on the Assembly Hall, that the property should be vested in trustees as a place of worship, an assembly hall, and a minister's dwelling, in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and that power should be given to the Trustees to mortgage the property to such extent within the existing debt as may be found necessary, the Trustees to be Sir James M'Culloch and Messrs. James MacBain, John Mathieson, and William Paterson Muir.

The hall was found of great service to the Church. It accommodated the Assembly and Commission. It was used by the Presbytery of Melbourne, the Home Mission Committee, and all the other standing committees of the Church, as well as committees for special business. The Theological Hall library had been placed in the upper room, where also the students met with the Professors. The hall was used every Sabbath by the Welsh Calvanistic Methodists for public worship. Public meetings were held in it from time to time, and a series of lectures had been given in it in connection with the Presbyterian Association, while the manse was occupied by Rev. P. Mercer, who was Secretary of Committees and also one of the Professors.

The Sustentation Fund scheme, after much patient deliberation and modification, suggested by Presbyteries, assumed at length the following form :—

1. "That a Sustentation Fund be formed in connection with this Church, to which all congregations shall be required to contribute,

and out of which all the ministers of the Church shall receive an equal dividend, subject to certain conditions to be hereafter specified.

2 "That the equal dividend to be aimed at shall be £300 per annum, and that the amount available for distribution, or the amount contributed over and above the £300 by congregations giving above that sum, shall be divided equally among the present congregations, subject to these conditions—1. That no congregation shall receive from the fund above £300. 2. That in the meantime no minister shall receive from the fund more than £50 above what his congregation contributed.

3. "That new and vacant congregations, contributing less than £200 per annum, shall not be entitled to be placed on the platform of the equal dividend without the special authority of the General Assembly or the recommendation of the Presbytery of the bounds.

4. "That collegiate charges shall account with the fund for the stipend of one minister only.

5. "That congregations may supplement, out of their ordinary revenue, the amount received from the fund; but if such congregations contribute to the fund less than £300 per annum, the minister shall receive from it only the amount contributed.

6. "That congregations contributing less than £300 shall be required to contribute, at least for the first year, a sum to be determined by the Sustentation Committee, and approved by the Presbytery; whatever they might give less shall be deducted from the aid which they would afterwards receive.

7. "That congregations, giving a stipend of at least £300, and desiring still to pay the same directly to their ministers, if they shall send in a contribution to the fund, with vouchers for the actual payment of a stipend of £300, may receive credit with the fund for the amount of both, as if the entire sum had been remitted."

The Assembly resolved to launch the scheme as soon as possible. With this view, they decided to send deputies to visit Presbyteries, congregations, and Committees of Management, for the purpose of more fully explaining the scheme, and endeavouring to secure their hearty co-operation in working it out.

The vexed question of the exchange of allotments No. 7, belonging to the Scotch College site, and No. 15, belonging to the Chalmers Church site, was at length brought to a final settlement.

An immense amount of discussion arose out of the inquiry whether Chalmers Church had a moral if not legal claim to the exchange, in virtue of twelve years' occupation, and of a positive agreement. The General Assembly decided in favour of the Church having the exchange ratified by a special Act of the Legislature. Accordingly, a Bill was brought into Parliament for the purpose of legalising the alteration of the two trusts to the extent of the two portions of the land referred to being respectively taken from the one site and added to the other. It was found, however, that the Trustees of the Scotch College ground were not unanimous in favour of the exchange. Moreover, a number of the members of Assembly

were not only not in favour of, but were positively hostile to the exchange being legalised. They carried their opposition into Parliament, and with such urgency that it was found that the expense of carrying the private Bill through the two Houses would be enormous on both sides. And the session of Parliament being far advanced, it was judged expedient to abandon the Bill altogether. The reasons assigned for the abandonment were :—

1. "Because the further prosecution of the Bill, in the face of the strong opposition which has been raised to it, would involve the Assembly in expenses which would be altogether disproportionate to the ends intended to be served by it.

2. "Because the strong feeling which has been evoked in reference to the whole subject, and which a further prosecution of this Bill would only intensify, tends to disturb the peace and harmony of the Church, and is highly prejudicial to its interests and injurious to the cause of religion."

In regard to the settlement of Rev. J. B. Reid as minister of the congregation at Swan Hill the Assembly, in considering the reference, declared—"That the action of the Committee and the Presbytery of Castlemaine thereanent was approved ; that the Swan Hill district was placed under the jurisdiction of that Presbytery, and that they instruct them to proceed to Mr. Reid's induction in the usual manner."

The Committee on the Chinese and Aborigines Missions were authorised to engage Rev. W. Young as Superintendent of the Chinese Mission. Mr. Young was an educated and Christian gentleman from Singapore, and was able to converse in one of the Chinese dialects, but was not familiar with the Cantonese, which was the one generally, if not universally, spoken by the Chinese residents in this Colony. Having taken up his abode in Ballaarat, and having manifested a deep interest both in the spiritual and temporal welfare of the Chinese in that city, he became so far acquainted with their dialect as to be able to act as interpreter, when it was necessary, and also to converse in some degree with them. His influence over them became considerable, from the good services which he often rendered to them. Hence the authority sought and obtained to employ him as Superintendent of the Mission. One good argument for employing him was put forth, to the effect that provision was made for his salary without interfering with the funds which were at the disposal of the Committee for meeting existing engagements.

It ought to be mentioned that Mr. Young had compiled a small primer for the use of Chinese children attending the school opened under Cheok Hong Cheong, son of Peng Nam, the missionary. A number of the half-caste children of the camp also attended. Some of Bateman's hymns were translated, as well as the primer, into the colloquial dialect of the Canton province, and were printed in the ordinary English characters. The children took readily to these elementary books, and made satisfactory progress both in reading and singing. The work going on was highly encouraging.

A pleasing feature in the effort to make this assault on Chinese heathenism in the Colony was the fact that all the expenses, including salaries, books, printing, &c., connected with the school were met by that generous friend of the mission, J. M., of whom a sketch has already been given in these pages. He gave evidence further of his deep interest in the Mission by taking frequent trips from Melbourne to Ballaarat, that he might encourage and test the work so auspiciously begun.

GENERAL ABSTRACT SHOWING THE AMOUNT RAISED DURING THE YEAR ENDING 30TH SEPTEMBER.

	£	s.	d.
Widows and Orphans' Fund	1,967	19	6½
Home Mission	493	1	5
Chinese and Aborigines Mission	767	10	10
New Hebrides Mission	397	3	8
Native Teachers' Fund	60	0	0
Dayspring Maintenance Fund	1,049	10	4
Dayspring Insurance Fund	97	10	0
Fund for building Schoolhouse, Ramahyuck	35	10	9
Infirm Ministers' Fund	662	18	0
Theological Hall Fund—Capital Account	1,005	2	6
Theological Hall Fund—Revenue Account	617	4	6
Rokewood Church Endowment	29	4	4
Committee on State of Religion	21	6	0
Church Expenses Fund	231	6	10
	£7,435	8	8½

CHAPTER VIII.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR—1872.

JANUARY.—This year's proceedings began with a loud warning voice from the world of the unseen. Two much-esteemed brethren, eminently useful servants of Christ, one an elder and the other a minister, had been recently called away from the sanctuary below to the sanctuary above. These were Mr. J. S. Ogilvy, elder of the Church at Footscray, and the Treasurer of the Assembly, and the Rev. George Mackie, of South Yarra.

A serious buggy accident befel Rev. D. Meiklejohn, of Kilmore, whereby he was under the necessity of submitting to amputation of the foot. This called forth an expression of great sympathy from the brethren.

February.—It was agreed that the congregation of Broadmeadows should be permanently annexed to Bulla, and should be constituted a portion of the charge of Rev. W. Fraser.

March.—The ordination of Mr. D. M'Donald, missionary to the New Hebrides, was carried into effect in the Assembly Hall on the evening of the 15th. The two founders of the mission—one of them, especially, the originator—were in the Colony, and their services were enlisted on the solemn occasion. After the sermon and ordination by Rev. Dr. M'Donald, the Rev. John Inglis, of Aneityum, addressed the young missionary, and the Rev. Dr. Geddie, the oldest missionary in the group, gave an address on the condition and prospects of the New Hebrides Mission.

Rev. Charles Moir, having returned to the Colony from his leave of absence, resigned his charge of the St. Kilda congregation. The reason assigned was the state of his wife's health, which required a lengthened stay in the European climate, and he did not doubt that a sphere of labour would, in the providence of God, be opened up. The congregation acquiesced, and the tie was dissolved.

The Presbytery, in parting with Rev. C. Moir, expressed their entire confidence in him as a minister of Christ and a member of Presbytery, their high estimate of his obliging disposition and exemplary character as a Christian brother, their sense of his fidelity, acceptance, and the success with which he has laboured for fifteen years in the charge of St. Kilda congregation, their appreciation of the many and disinterested services which he has rendered to Presbyterianism, and the cause of Christ generally in this Colony, and their earnest hope that he will secure a suitable sphere of ministerial work in the Home country.

April.—It was proposed to unite Darraweit Guim with Wallan Wallan and Donnybrook, so as to constitute one charge.

May.—It was arranged that, in order to supply Darraweit Guim with divine service in part, Donnybrook should give up the fore-

noon service once a month, and Wallan Wallan should give up an afternoon service as often. A call had been brought out by the united charge in favour of Rev. J. T. Muir, and, having been presented to him, was accepted. The induction was effected at Wallan Wallan on 20th June.

June.—The Rev. D. Meiklejohn, in consequence of the deep affliction with which it had pleased Divine Providence to visit him, had felt it to be his duty to resign his charge of St. George's congregation, Kilmore. His object was to return to Britain, where he believed he would more readily find suitable occupation than in the Colony. The Presbytery received his resignation with deep regret and sympathy, the congregation having acquiesced.*

The Melbourne Presbytery also learned that Mr. Mathew had forwarded a letter to the Moderator of the General Assembly, intimating the resignation of his status as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. Accordingly, he was declared no longer a minister or member of this Church.

July.—A movement was begun with a view, if possible, to effect a Union between the two congregations in Kilmore, one of which was now vacant.

August.—A call from the South Yarra congregation, had been brought out in favour of Rev. George Tait, M.A., of the Richardson and Avoca. The call was signed by one hundred and thirty-four members and thirty-six adherents. The Wimmera Presbytery having presented him with the call, he accepted. The induction was carried into effect on 2nd September.

Rev. Mr. Archibald had resigned his pastoral charge of the congregations at Longwood, Duck Ponds, and Euroa. The people regarded their minister with cordial esteem and affection, but through prevailing depression in certain parts of the district, it was found impossible meanwhile to fulfil their obligations. The Presbytery, with regret, agreed to annul the pastoral connection.

After full inquiry, it was agreed to allow Mr. W. Fraser to hold his status as a preacher in connection with the Church.

It was reported that a Permissive Bill was under consideration in the Legislative Assembly. It was agreed to forward a petition in its favour.

The Trustees appointed to hold the Church property at Lilydale, were—John Hutchison, William Mitchell, and William Scott.

September.—It was under consideration whether it would be practicable for the ministers of city and suburban congregations to

* It was agreed to record an expression not only of sympathy, but of the high esteem entertained towards their afflicted brother. Since his settlement as pastor in Kilmore some years ago, Mr. Meiklejohn had given abundant evidence of great ability and persevering diligence. While an instructive preacher of the gospel, and assiduous in discharging the ordinary duties of the pastorate, he had taken an active interest in the public affairs of the Church, and in promoting the efficiency of our monthly periodical. His writings displayed no ordinary powers, both of thinking and of language. They are strongly characterised by solid judgment, clear and luminous reasoning, and a style at once clear and impressive.

avail themselves of the privilege extended to them of visiting the Reformatory and Industrial Schools.

October.—Rev. A. C. Smith had tendered his resignation of the charge of the John Knox congregation. The people expressed their affectionate regard for their minister, and a high appreciation of his ability and faithfulness as a preacher, but at the same time, considering all the circumstances of the case, agreed to acquiesce in the resignation. The minister was, therefore, freed from his charge.

The Rev. J. S. Boyd had resigned his charge of the congregations of Essendon and Keilor. The congregations, while testifying to the fidelity and earnestness of his ministrations, yet would not oppose his resignation. The tie was therefore dissolved.

Rev. W. G. Fraser, late of the United Presbyterian Church, Sutton, Cheshire, England, had recently arrived in the Colony, with a view to connecting himself with this Church. He was cordially welcomed.

November.—A Mission Church had been in course of formation for five years in North Carlton under the fostering care of Chalmers Church congregation. The missionary was supported by the liberality of the congregation, his salary being supplemented by a donation from the late Richard Brodie, Esq., to the extent of £100 per annum. Now it was their desire to have a minister permanently settled over them, and they were anxious to have a guarantee for the annual payment of the interest on the legacy of Mr. Brodie, amounting to £100 yearly.

The Scots Church congregation, Collins-street, were desirous of obtaining power to mortgage their property.

St. Andrew's congregation, Carlton, were seeking leave to mortgage their manse and ground with a view to reducing the interest on the Church debt.

St. George's congrégation, Collingwood, wished authority to dispose of the site which they held for a manse, in order to purchase a more suitable one, and to erect a house thereon.

It was arranged that there should be a regular weekly visitation of the St. Kilda-road Industrial Schools by the ministers of Melbourne and suburbs. The visitation of the *Nelson* and *Sir Harry Smith* in the Bay had been undertaken by the ministers of Williamstown, Sandridge, and Footscray.

December.—North Carlton, having been recently declared to be a congregation duly organised, brought out a call in favour of Mr. Joseph Wood, licentiate. The call was accepted, and the ordination and induction carried into effect on the 20th January.

The decease of the Rev. W. Fraser, of Bulla, was announced. The Melbourne Presbytery adopted a memorial minute.*

* It was agreed to record the esteem in which their venerable father and brother was held by them as a man and as a minister of Jesus Christ. He had commended himself to the confidence and affection of all who knew him, by patience of disposition, unassuming demeanour, simplicity and transparency of character, and blamelessness of life. His ministry had, in the Providence of God, been a lengthy one, and had been eminently characterised by consistency and earnestness, and unvarying assiduity.

The Presbytery of Dromana applied for a regular supply of pulpit services.

Yea and Alexandra had undergone various changes, which were favourable to the Presbyterian cause. Both were commended to the earnest attention of the Home Mission Committee.

ASSEMBLY, 9TH JANUARY, 1872.

REV. T. M. FRASER, EX-MODERATOR.

A *pro re nata* meeting of the Assembly was called for the purpose of making arrangements rendered necessary by the death of the Moderator, Rev. George Mackie, South Yarra,* and Mr. J. S. Ogilvy,† the Treasurer of the Church.

A letter was read from the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, condoling with the Assembly on the death of the Moderator.

It was arranged to prepare a minute for the record of the death of the Moderator and of the Treasurer.

Memorial minutes were accordingly adopted.

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* MEMORIAL MINUTE.

The Presbytery (Melbourne) deeply mourned the loss sustained by the death of the Rev. George Mackie. They felt a special poignancy in this dispensation. He was eminently devout, useful, and beloved. In deliberation and discussion, he was not only able and ready, but, what is more, he was candid yet considerate, firm yet conciliatory. The tasks assigned to him in carrying into effect the Presbytery's decisions were numerous and laborious. These he prosecuted with cheerful and indefatigable zeal, and for the most part to a successful issue. Before his faith difficulties vanished. His faith and hope, stimulated by love, enabled him under God to achieve remarkable success, in maintaining and extending the operations of the Church. As Convener of the Chinese and Aborigines Mission Committee, he did good service. In all his activity in connection with Church agencies, he ever regarded his pastoral duties as those which demanded his first care and his freshest strength. Numerous public institutions also received the benefits of his counsel and help. He was a consistent and energetic worker in the temperance cause. The prisoners in the gaol were not beyond the reach of his compassionate efforts. From his generous, frank, and accessible nature, he was ever ready to do good service to all who might be in want of his help as he had opportunity. His sun went down, however, while it was yet day, and the consolation was, that their highly esteemed brother, though his services here were so much needed, had gone to be with Christ, which was far better.

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† MEMORIAL MINUTE.

Mr. Ogilvy was cut off suddenly and without warning. Like his brother David, so recently deceased, John was eminently distinguished by an earnest and active piety, spotless purity of life, simplicity of purpose, strict conscientiousness in all duties, and a supreme anxiety to promote the cause of Christ at whatever cost to himself. As a man of business he was universally esteemed. He lived by faith, keeping and adorning the gospel in the sight of all men. In his attention to Sabbath-schools, he was an example to others; as an elder, wise in counsel, patient and self-denying. In his own sphere he proved himself one of the pillars of the Church. He was liberal in his contributions, and unwearied in his zeal. Though summoned without warning, he was not unprepared. To him "to live was Christ, and to die was gain."

Rev. J. Inglis, a missionary of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland, at Aneityum, New Hebrides, being present, was associated with the members in their deliberations.

There were eleven points of business to be submitted for consideration and settlement. There were present twenty-four ministers and twenty-one elders, representing eight Presbyteries, who answered to their names.

Rev. A. J. Campbell was appointed Convener of the Committee on Missions to the Chinese and Aborigines, in room of the late Rev. G. Mackie, till the next meeting of Assembly.

Mr. J. M. Davies, solicitor, was appointed Treasurer to the Assembly, in room of the late Mr. J. S. Ogilvy, until next meeting of Assembly.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 7th May, 1872.

Rev. T. M. Fraser, ex-Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	W. B. Hutchison, M.A.—Urana and Jerilderie.
,,	,,	D. Shanks—Deniliquin.
,,	,,	J. Hampshire—Majorca.
,,	,,	H. M'Kail—Bacchus Marsh.
Translation	,,	J. Smeaton—Ebenezer Church, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	D. M'Kenzie—Footscray.
Resignation	,,	W. Smyth—Miners' Rest.
,,	,,	H. B. Giles—Winchelsea.
,,	,,	J. Don—Penola.
,,	,,	W. Robertson—Trentham and Tylden.
,,	,,	C. Moir—St. Kilda.
Death	,,	George Mackie—South Yarra.

It was agreed to send an address to Her Majesty the Queen, conveying the cordial congratulations of this Church on the recent recovery of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales from dangerous illness.

It was announced that the late Richard Brodie, Esq., had bequeathed £2,000 to this Church for Home Mission purposes.

There were nineteen points of business requiring consideration by the Commission.

The congregation of St. Kilda were authorised to mortgage their manse property to the extent of £1,500, provided that the application for the certificate of title to sell, lease, or mortgage be made through the law agent of this Church.

Authority was given to the congregation at Stawell to mortgage their Church property to the extent of £1,000, on the same condition.

St. Andrew's Church, Ballaarat, obtained consent to mortgage their Church property in Sturt-street, Ballaarat, to the extent of £1,500, under the same restriction.

The congregation at Sandhurst were permitted to mortgage their school property to the extent of £750, on equal terms.

It was agreed that, in the election of ministers, adherents should

always have the right to vote as well as on the occasion of the first settlement, as has been the rule heretofore, subject to confirmation by next Assembly, after hearing returns from Sessions and Presbyteries.

It appeared that Rev. W. Mathew, having resigned his connection with this Church, withdrew his resignation. It was resolved that, Mr. Mathew having admitted an irregularity, the Commission accept the acknowledgment.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 12th November, 1872.

Rev. William Henderson, Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	J. Don—Miners' Rest and Coghill's Creek.
,,	,,	A. M'Nicol—Piggoreet, Pitfield, and Staffordshire Reef.
,,	,,	F. T. Jenkins—Mansfield.
,,	,,	C. Chambers—Newstead and Guildford.
,,	,,	W. Ross, M.A., Ph.D.—Taradale and Fryerstown.
,,	,,	J. Cameron, ordained—Rosedale and Walhalla.
,,	,,	J. S. Muir—Donnybrook, Wallan Wallan, and Darraweit Guim.
Translation	,,	C. J. Cameron—Daylesford.
,,	,,	J. D. Robertson—Ryrie-street, Geelong.
,,	,,	G. Tait, M.A.—South Yarra.
Resignation	,,	A. Morrison—Clunes.
,,	,,	J. H. Archibald—Longwood, Euroa, and Duck Ponds.
,,	,,	D. Meiklejohn—St. George's, Kilmore.
,,	,,	A. C. Smith—John Knox, Melbourne.
,,	,,	J. S. Boyd—Essendon and Keilor.

There were at this date enrolled one hundred and fourteen ministers.

There were fifty-two items on the programme of business.

It was agreed that the Assembly should present a petition to the Legislative Council for the amendment of the present Education Bill.

The Assembly also resolved to petition Parliament against a Bill which had been introduced proposing to legalise marriage with a deceased wife's sister. Not content with this, it was resolved to petition Her Majesty the Queen against the Bill. After it passed the two Houses of the Victorian Parliament, the petition was one of no small interest, and it is given here in full :—

"To Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria.—The petition of your Majesty's loyal subjects, the members of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, now met in Assembly, humbly showeth—That a Bill has passed the Legislature of this Colony, which, if sanctioned by your Majesty, will legalise in the Colony marriage with a deceased wife's sister. That your Majesty's petitioners have grave objections to such a Bill becoming law, believing it to be opposed to the Word of God and good morals, and certain to effect injuriously the confidence and purity of family life. That this conviction of your Majesty's petitioners is shared by multitudes of their fellow-colonists of other denominations, who, in

common with them, regard the proposed measure with dread and deeply-seated aversion. May it therefore please your Gracious Majesty to refuse your Majesty's royal sanction to the said Bill, and your Majesty's petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray," &c.

It was now resolved that a commencement should be made with the administration of the Infirm Ministers' Fund. The Assembly had resolved that £5,000 should be required as the capital before any apportionment of the interest should be allowed. This sum had been virtually realised. It was agreed, therefore, that the fund should be brought into operation.

In consequence of the discussions which had taken place in connection with the enlargement of the building accommodation of the Scotch College, it was deemed a convenient opportunity for the Assembly having a thorough understanding and making a clear and definite arrangement with Mr. Morrison, the Principal, as to the relations in which they stood to each other. A Special Committee was appointed to consider the subject. The following was the result of the deliberation. It was resolved—

"That a form of agreement be drawn up between this Assembly and Mr. Morrison, the Principal of the College, embodying in it the following regulations :—

1. "That in reference to charges of heresy and immorality, the Assembly must proceed against Mr. Morrison by libel, and that the decisions so arrived at shall have the same force and finality as in the case of ministers.

2. "That in reference to charges of inefficieney or misconduet, the Assembly shall be precluded from arriving at a final decision without six months' notice, it being understood that such decision shall not be pleaded in bar as final, should Mr. Morrison desire to have the same reviewed.

3. "That, for the present, and until the debt has been extinguished, 12½ per cent. on the gross income shall be devoted to repairs, and the payment of the debt on the buildings, and the expenses of the Committee appointed to watch over the institution, the percentages to be paid quarterly to the Treasurer.

4. "That, after the debt has been paid off, 10 per cent. be handed over to the Assembly, to be devoted to educational purposes, and the payment of expenses, as aforesaid.

5. "That Mr. Morrison shall recognize the authority and jurisdiction of the Assembly in regard to the internal management of the institution, and also that the Assembly shall retain a power of veto with reference to the appointment or continued engagement of assistant teachers.

6. "That a mortgage of £8,000 be negotiated on the terms of the trust deed, with the view of consolidating the debt on the present buildings, and the erection of new buildings, according to the plans already approved.

7. "That Mr. Morrison withdraw his claim for interest on the advances made by him.

8. "That the proposals made by Mr. Morrison relative to

bursaries be remitted to the Education Committee, to be reported to the Commission in May.

9. "That Mr. Morrison give six months' notice of his intention to resign his appointment."

The Assembly at this meeting recorded their gratification at the increased number of students in attendance at the Theological Hall and renewed the expression of their great desire that the ministers, office-bearers, and Christian people of this Church should seek to interest young men in the work of the ministry, and to encourage those who are specially fitted for it to engage in the service of Christ. The Assembly heard with much pleasure of the formation of the Students' Missionary Society, and heartily approved of the scheme for scholarships, and authorised the raising of the necessary funds by the Committee. They also approved of the fencing of the Presbyterian allotment at the University, taking possession of said allotment, and considering the uses to which it might be turned. They were gratified, too, with the very large accession to the library during the past year, and gave cordial thanks to the representatives of the Rev. G. Mackie, and to Mr. Smith, of Emerald Hill, for donations of books, and the Treasurer was instructed to pay the usual allowance to the Professors.

In regard to the New Hebrides Mission, the Conference of Missionaries at the Islands had resolved on changing the headquarters of the *Dayspring* from Melbourne to Sydney. It was agreed to fall in with a proposal to increase the missionaries' salaries.

Mr. and Mrs. Daniel M'Donald had settled at Havannah Harbour, Efate, with the approval of the Mission Synod. A new mission boat was sent down to him.

Encouraging intelligence was to hand respecting Aniwa.

The *Dayspring* Maintenance Fund showed a balance of £303 6s. 1d.

The Imperial Government had taken vigorous measures to suppress kidnapping and slavery in the South Seas.

Touching the *Christian Review*, as the Church organ, it was agreed to place the management entirely in the hands of the publishers, with the proviso that the Assembly retain the power of veto in regard to the appointment of editor. The Rev. P. Mercer was appointed editor for the next year.

It was agreed to grant authority to the Scots Church, Collins-street, to mortgage their Church property to the extent of £10,000 with a view to the erection of a new Church.

St. Andrew's congregation, Carlton, were authorised to mortgage their property to the extent of £1,500, for the enlargement of their Church, on condition that 2½ per cent. be paid on the sale of a portion of the property sanctioned by last Assembly.

The congregation of the High Church, Geelong, obtained leave to mortgage their Church property to the extent of £2,500, for the purpose of erecting a manse and vestry, and of consolidating their debt. The liberty given however, was on condition that the amount borrowed be reduced to £1,500 within the next five

years, and that the new manse be secured to the Church in the usual manner.

The Swan Hill congregation were allowed to mortgage their Church property to the extent of £450, for the erection of a manse and the consolidation of their debt.

Leave was granted to the congregation at Eaglehawk to mortgage their Church property to the extent of £500, in order to reduce the interest on the present debt.

Authority was given to the congregation of St. George's, Collingwood, to sell their present manse site, which was unsuitable, on condition that the proceeds of the sale be applied to the purchase of another site, and to the erection of the building; and on the further condition, that an amount, equal to what may be realised from the sale of the site, be also raised by the congregation towards the erection of the house.

The congregation at Rokewood were authorised to sell their school property, and to apply the proceeds to congregational purposes.

In connection with the report on the State of Religion, the Assembly enjoined Presbyteries to hold conferences on the subject in the month of April, expressed an earnest hope that the promised scheme of colportage would be speedily and vigorously prosecuted, and counselled all Presbyteries, ministers, and members of the Church, to co-operate cordially, as opportunity afforded them, with Christian brethren of other denominations, for the promotion of gospel ordinances and gospel blessings all over the land.

The employment of lay agents engaged the attention of the Assembly.

A memorial from members of this Church, and of the Church of England, proposing that joint action should be taken by the two Churches for supplying divine ordinances in the thinly-peopled districts of the Colony, was read. The proposal was favourably entertained.

Mr. W. P. Muir was appointed Treasurer to the Church in place of Mr. J. M. Davies, resigned.

The Assembly noticed with much regret the intention of Dr. Cairns to resign the principalship of the Theological Hall; they had not forgotten the great labours which he had bestowed on the training of young men for the ministry of this Church, both before and after the present establishment of the Hall, and they acknowledged the great obligation under which this Church was laid by Dr. Cairns's presentation of a large portion of his theological library. The professors for the present would simply propose a Chairman in place of Principal.

The report of the Committee on the Chinese and Aborigines Mission for the year was not particularly encouraging. There was a considerable shortcoming in the revenue, and the mission agency would require to be reduced. Many congregations failed to make the collections. There were large arrears due to the mission agents, and the Committee were authorised to borrow a sum not exceeding £300 for the purpose of clearing off these arrears. The agency was

reduced to Mr. Young and Paul Chang Quong, and if Mr. Young's salary was to be paid out of the ordinary revenue, then the expenditure for the current year would be £400, while that on the aboriginal side would be £325. The Convener, Rev. A. J. Campbell, who was appointed in the emergency arising from Rev. Mr. Mackie's decease, resigned.

Events of the Year.—1873.

February.—Rev. J. Wood was ordained and inducted into the pastoral charge of the North Carlton congregation on the 20th.

March.—A call was brought out by the John Knox congregation in favour of Rev. A. Hardie, but it was not accepted.

An inquiry was instituted into the spiritual necessities of Nagambie and the adjoining districts along the Goulburn river, and the Home Mission Committee were recommended to take further steps.

Mr. Arthur Davidson, student in divinity, after the usual trial exercises, was duly licensed.

In connection with the appointment of Trustees for the Church property at South Yarra, it was recommended that the resignations of Messrs. Dickson and Thompson be forwarded to the Lands Department, and that Rev. G. Tait and Mr. Robert M'Kechney be appointed in the place of Rev. G. Mackie and Mr. J. S. Ogilvy, both deceased.

In the Trusteeship of Erskine Church, Carlton, the following appointments were made :—George Donaldson, in room of William Aitken, resigned ; Thomas Thompson, in room of Frederick A. Nell, who had left the Colony ; and Alexander Alexander, to make the required number of five.

The congregation of St. Kilda brought out a call in favour of Rev. Dr. Cameron, colleague of Rev. Dr. Cairns. On the call being presented, he signified his acceptance, and was duly inducted on the 25th.

The Rev. George Smith, missionary from China, at present in this Colony on furlough, labouring under the Presbyterian Church of England, was introduced to the Melbourne Presbytery. Mr. Smith gave an interesting and instructive account of his mission. He was cordially welcomed and thanked for his address.

Rev. R. Hamilton, recently appointed Convener of the Chinese and Aborigines Mission Committee, took occasion to urge on the attention of the Presbytery the great pecuniary embarrassment of the mission, and the necessity of bringing authority to bear on the congregations within the bounds, so as to secure prompt and liberal collections.

April.—The congregation at Essendon had issued a call in favour of Rev. W. G. Fraser. He now accepted, and the induction was carried into effect on the 22nd.

The attention of Presbytery was again called to the presence of Rev. G. Smith, missionary to the Chinese, and to the important service he had rendered to the Chinese Mission in connection with

this Church during his brief sojourn. He had visited the Chinese privately, and had lectured and preached for the benefit of the mission funds. In a variety of ways, and in the principal centres of population, he had energetically interested himself in the mission, and sought to stimulate effort among our congregations to promote the spiritual welfare of the Chinese population. He was about to leave the Colony next day, and we might see his face no more. The Moderator addressed him in words of warm thankfulness for his kind and earnest services, and expressed the most cordial wishes of himself and of the Presbytery for his invigorated health and his future comfort and success in his work.

May.—The congregations of St. George's, Kilmore, and Broadford, brought out a call in favour of Mr. A. Hardie, preacher. After passing his examinations satisfactorily, having accepted the call, signed by one hundred and five members and adherents, he was duly ordained and inducted into his pastoral charge on the 21st.

June.—It was agreed that the Presbytery should spend the first two hours of the next ordinary meeting in private conference on the state of religion, and that the subject for special consideration should be, the best means to be adopted for overtaking the wants of the Presbyterian population in and around Melbourne.

July.—The Conference agreed unanimously to recommend the importance and urgency of entering vigorously on the work of Church extension, with the view of overtaking the wants of the districts. A large Committee were appointed to consider the whole question.

Rev. P. S. Menzies applied for leave of absence, under medical advice, that he might seek the restoration of his health by a short sea voyage. He contemplated being absent till September, and he solicited the help of the Presbytery in granting partial supply to his pulpit.

August.—Mr. Andrew Harper was introduced to the Presbytery as a licentiate of the Free Church of Scotland. Mr. Harper had been received by the Home Mission Committee.

An encouraging visit had been paid to Nagambie, which was detached from the Seymour charge, and was joined to Dargalong. Services had been conducted and encouraging meetings of Presbyterians were held at both places. It was found that they were desirous of being formed into a charge, that they might have regular supply of services. It was suggested that, as Rev. J. Summers was resident in Nagambie, an arrangement might be made with him to conduct regular service, as far as his health would permit.

A visit had also been paid to Murchison. It was found that there was a considerable congregation already formed, under the ministry of Mr. Swift, who was a missionary in the employment of one of the minor Methodist bodies. The congregation was composed mostly of Presbyterians, and they were very desirous of joining the Presbyterian Church, but they were much attached to Mr. Swift's ministry.

John Knox congregation had given a unanimous call to Mr.

Arthur Davidson, licentiate. The call was accepted, and, after the usual examinations, the ordination was effected on Monday, 18th.

September.—After inquiry concerning Murchison the report was confirmed. It now appeared that a large proportion of Mr. Swift's congregation were Presbyterians; that they were desirous of being re-united to the General Assembly; that they were exceedingly unwilling to lose Mr. Swift's services, and were anxious that he also should become connected with the Presbyterian Church; that Mr. Swift himself, who was merely engaged by the Methodists to do mission work, having examined the Presbyterian Standards, declared that he would feel no difficulty in subscribing to them; that he was warmly interested in the people, and he would be satisfied with whatever rank or status the General Assembly might be pleased to assign to him. A special visit, however, to the spot was recommended, in order to call a meeting of the Presbyterians of the district, ascertain their views definitely with regard to Union with the Church, and give them such advice as may seem needful.

October.—Rev. A. D. Kininmont gave a brief narrative of the remarkable preservation which a merciful Providence had vouchsafed to Mrs. Kininmont and himself, as well as the other passengers, during the recent wreck of the steamer *Rangitoto* on its passage to New Zealand, and expressed his gratitude to God for their deliverance from great and imminent perils. The Presbytery resolved to place on record their deep sense of the goodness of God, in the preservation of Mr. and Mrs. Kininmont in the hour of danger, and to unite with them in their expression of thanksgiving.

A second visit, under the direction of the Presbytery, was paid to Murchison. A meeting of the Presbyterians of the district was held, and was numerously attended. They were desirous of Union with the Presbyterian Church, but it was indispensable to such Union that the Rev. T. B. Swift, who had been labouring in connection with the United Methodist Free Church, should be received along with them. They agreed on a petition to the Presbytery asking admission. They had informed Mr. Swift by letter of their intention to do so, and requested him to join them in the application, if consistent with his convictions, and not impracticable in the face of his present ecclesiastical connection. Mr. Swift wrote to the Presbytery, stating that he approved of the Standards and polity of the Presbyterian Church, and that he willingly joined with his people in their application, especially as he was not ministerially bound to the other connection.

Information was given to the Presbytery respecting the district of Mooroopna and Toolamba, that settlement was proceeding rapidly in the district, chiefly by a Presbyterian population, and that it would be well if an ordained missionary were sent without delay to occupy the ground.

Rev. P. S. Menzies, on account of continued illness, applied for extended leave of absence. He stipulated for twelve months, dating from 1st October.

November.—It was reported that after deliberate inquiry by the Committee appointed to deal with the petition of the Presbyterians at Murchison, and of Mr. Swift, that they were fully satisfied with Mr. Swift's doctrinal views, Christian character, eminent success in his work, and great influence for good in the district, and recommended that they should be admitted by the Assembly into the Church, Mr. Swift having assigned to him the position of an ordained pastor. The Presbytery joined in the recommendation, leaving it to the Assembly to decide as to Mr. Swift's status.

The following Trustees were appointed to hold Church lands at Northcote:—Messrs. William Paterson, Andrew M'Intosh, John Mann, John Smith, and George Smith.

Mr. William Martin was elected Trustee of Union Church, Hotham, in the room of James Marshall, deceased.

Messrs. John Bell, Kangaroo Ground; William Herbert, Yarra Flats; and Duncan M'Nab, Lilydale, were elected Trustees for the manse property, Lilydale.

It was agreed that Mr. James Bennie should be elected as Trustee representing the Presbyterians in the management of the cemetery.

December.—The General Assembly, at their recent meeting, having agreed to receive the Murchison Presbyterians and Mr. Swift into fellowship, resolved that Mr. Swift should be ordained as a missionary in connection with the Presbyterian Church. (Recorded in business of Assembly, page 332.) The ordination was effected at Murchison on Sabbath, the 14th inst., by the Melbourne Presbytery.

Trustees were elected for the Broadmeadows Church property—Messrs. Charles M'Allister Shannon, George Edols, and William Ferguson, in the room of Messrs. P. M. Mitchell and Adam Jenkins, deceased, James M'Intosh, who had left the Colony, and John Aulty and William Murray, resigned.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 6TH MAY, 1873.

REV. WILLIAM HENDERSON, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	J. Wood—North Carlton, Melbourne.
,,	,,	W. G. Fraser—Essendon and Keilor.
,,	,,	R. Lewers—St. John's Church, Sandhurst.
Translation	,,	G. W. Adam—Horsham.
,,	,,	R. Kennedy—Richardson and Avoca.
,,	,,	A. Cameron, D.D.—St. Kilda.
Resignation	,,	A. Robb—Albury and Wodonga.
,,	,,	J. Black—Ballan
Death	,,	W. Fraser—Bulla.

There were twenty items of business on the programme.

The Commission authorised the Presbytery of Castlemaine to proceed forthwith to the settlement of a minister at Huntly, Axedale, and Goornong, according to the laws of the Church.

In connection with the report of the State of Religion Committee, it was agreed that special consideration in the Conferences should be given to the first question in the programme:—"What are the best means available for securing adequate Bible instruction for the

young, now that the provision for this purpose is so largely withdrawn from the common schools?"

A memorial was read from members of this Church on the subject of co-operation with the Church of England for the support of divine ordinances in the more thinly-peopled districts of the Colony. It was agreed to answer—"That, while appreciating the liberal feeling of the memorialists toward the Church of England, manifested in their memorial, as well as approving their desire for an economical distribution of pastoral labours in the Colony, the Commission beg to assure them that compliance with their request would be unconstitutional, on the ground that the General Assembly of last November referred the whole matter of co-operation to Presbyteries to report, and that these have not yet reported."

A large Committee was appointed to consider and report to next General Assembly what action should be taken in view of the fact that the Act of the Colonial Parliament legalizing marriage with a deceased wife's sister had received the royal assent, and, further, the Commission agreed "that the members of this Church be warned against contracting, and ministers against celebrating, such marriages."

On the subject of dealing with Church properties, it was agreed to authorise the congregations at Woolsthorpe and Pomborneit to apply the proceeds of the sale of their properties to the erection of Churches in their localities; also, the congregation at South Yarra to apply the proceeds of the sale of their Church property to the erection of a Sabbath-school hall and a vestry, and the congregation at Queenscliff to mortgage part of their manse site, and to apply the proceeds to the improvement of their Church.

The debt on the Assembly Hall at this date was £3,939.

The Rev. Dr. Nesbit, an agent of the London Missionary Society in the South Sea Islands, was introduced to the Commission. Dr. Nesbit and Dr. Turner had been labouring together in mission work for the last thirty years. They were both natives of the West of Scotland, and studied theology under Professor Thompson, of the Relief Church, in Paisley. On leaving the Hall, in 1838, their fellow-students, one of them the minister of Fitzroy, held a farewell service, and presented them with a memorial address, expressing the high esteem in which they were held, and wishing the richest blessing to rest on them in their great missionary enterprise.

Dr. Nesbit addressed the Commission on the work in which he and his fellow-labourer were engaged. The Commission agreed to record the high satisfaction with which they had received the visit and heard the address of the Rev. Dr. Nesbit, from Samoa; they rejoiced to hear of the success with which God had blessed the labours of the London Missionary Society in Polynesia; they reciprocate the goodwill which he had expressed and shown towards the missionary agents of this Church; they bid him God-speed in the object of his visit to this colony, and commend him to the kindest sympathy of the congregations of this Church which he may be enabled to address.

The following were the Trustees elected for the Ladies College :— Messrs. J. Matheson, W. K. Thomson, A. Scott, J. Lorimer, and J. Cumming.

It was resolved to instruct the Moderator and the Trustees to apply to the Governor-in-Council for permission to mortgage the college site for any sum not exceeding £5,000, to be applied to the erection of the College buildings. Other arrangements were made with a view to their being shortly in a position to choose a Principal of the College.

The Loan Fund, which had been brought into operation, was working satisfactorily. The loans issued up to this time amounted to £6,875, and the instalments, as they fell due, were being punctually paid.

CHAPTER IX.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 11TH NOVEMBER, 1873.

REV. W. S. LOGIN, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	A. C. Smith—Wangaratta and Oxley.
,,	,,	H. B. Giles—Albury and Wodonga.
,,	,,	R. J. Smith—Meredith and Lethbridge.
,,	,,	W. F. Fraser—Huntly, Goornong, and Axedale.
,,	,,	A. Hardie—St. George's Church, Kilmore.
,,	,,	A. Davidson—John Knox Church, Melbourne.
,,	,,	W. B. Hutchison, M.A.—Clunes.
Translation	,,	H. H. Finlay—Penola.
,,	,,	H. M'Kail—Bulla and Sunbury.
,,	,,	J. Lambie—Wyndham and Little River.
Resignation	,,	Dr. White (accepting a call to St. Andrew's Church, Sydney)—Eaglehawk.
Death	,,	D. Shank—Deniliquin and Ulupna.

THERE were enrolled one hundred and nineteen ministers.

The programme presented a list of seventy-one items.

The question of the religious education of the young, in view of the secular system of the Government, became one of paramount interest in the Assembly. A conference was held on the subject, and the suggestions thrown out were to be considered. A practical resolution was to be submitted in connection with the report on Sabbath-schools. The matured resolution which was adopted was :—

1. "That the Committees on Education and on the Sabbath-schools be discharged, and that a new Committee be appointed, to be called the Assembly's Committee on Religious Instruction.

"That the duties of the said Committee shall be to watch over the Sabbath-schools of the Church, to promote religious instruction in week-day schools, to encourage religious instruction in families, to aid in the spread of religious literature, to collect funds for these purposes, and, generally, to further religious instruction in every competent way.

3. "That the responsibility of all concerned, as to the duty of giving religious instruction, be more fully recognised, and that all office-bearers of the Church, parents, and private members be urged to regard this work as one of the first duties of every Christian.

4. "That congregations be recommended to provide suitable buildings, adequately furnished, in which the young may meet to receive religious instruction."

The Assembly had been aiming earnestly for some time at the establishment of a Ladies' College. They have now gone so far as to have a plan of the buildings, which, if carried out to the full extent, would cost about £12,000, and would accommodate thirty boarders and one hundred and fifty pupils. Initiatory steps, too

had been taken towards negotiating a loan of £5,000. One of the old Trustees, Mr. David Young, had so utilized the site, which was originally granted as a reserve for St. John's Presbyterian Church, that he had a surplus fund of fully £1,000. This sum would shortly be handed over to aid in the erection. It was thought they were now in a position to arrange the appointment of the Principal. With a view to the filling of this important office, having failed in obtaining a suitable person from Home, it became necessary to choose one from among the Colonial ranks. The eye of the Assembly was fixed on one admirably fitted for the post, would he only accept—the Rev. P. S. Menzies. Being in poor health, should he find it impracticable to prosecute the work of the ministry, the superintendence of the Ladies' College might impose a more manageable task on his energies. The offer was put before him, but having an unquenchable desire to abide in the calling of the ministry, he could only give a reply based on a condition. His proviso was—"If he had medical assurance that his health could not be sufficiently re-established to enable him to continue the work of the pastorate, and yet that he should be restored to such a measure of health as to fit him for some lighter work,"—in such a case he might embrace the offer. It may be stated that, through failing health, he was never able to entertain the idea of accepting the office.

The great question which excited the deepest interest in the Assembly, called forth the greatest amount of earnest discussion, and gave birth to the fullest development of biblical criticism and arousing eloquence that had ever awakened the echoes of the Assembly Hall, was that which related to marriage with a deceased wife's sister. The Act which had recently passed the Legislature and obtained the royal assent was opposed to the established principle and practice of the Presbyterian Church. And the inquiry was whether she would present a change of front, and conform to the enactment of the secular power, or maintain her old beliefs in scripture interpretation, follow the ancient traditions, and exercise her authority in upholding the discipline of the Church, in spite of the innovations of the Civil Government. The public interest in the discussion was intense. A report and an overture to the Assembly, the one from a large Committee appointed at the Commission in May, of which Rev. Dr. Cameron was Convener, and the other from Rev. J. Nish, transmitted by the Presbytery of Castlemaine, brought up the subject in its different aspects.

The report of the Committee and the overture were both read. The former would maintain the law and practice of the Church without any compromise. The latter would assail the scripture interpretation on which the Church law was based, and would have the Assembly simply to affirm that no minister of this Church is bound, by the recent change in the civil law, to change his practice, either in celebrating such marriages or in administering sealing ordinances to those by whom they have been contracted.

It was moved by Rev. Dr. Cairns—"That the Assembly approve

generally of the report, dismiss the overture, and declare the continued adherence of this Church to the doctrine of scripture, as stated in the twenty-fourth chapter of the Confession of Faith, on the subject of marriage, and especially of Section 4 of that chapter, as follows :—"Marriage ought not to be within the degree of consanguinity, or ever be made lawful, by any law of man, or consent of parties, so as these persons may live together as man and wife. The man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own, nor the woman of her husband's kindred nearer in blood than of her own." Further, the General Assembly reiterate the warning addressed by last Commission to the ministers of this Church against celebrating, and to the members of this Church against contracting, marriage with a deceased wife's sister."

The motion was seconded by Rev. R. Hamilton, Fitzroy.

The discussion occupied the entire morning meeting of the Assembly, then absorbed the whole of the meeting in the evening, and occupied the rivetted attention of the members, and of a numerous audience besides, during both morning and evening of the following day.

The report on the one side and the overture on the other continued the topic of the keenest and ablest debate. Rev. J. Nish, having moved the reception of the overture at the morning meeting, Rev. J. Caldwell seconded the motion.

Rev. A. Robertson proposed, as an amendment, seconded by Rev. W. G. Fraser—"That without entering into particulars, or pronouncing authoritatively either on one side or the other, the Assembly declare that the question of marriage with a deceased wife's sister be an open question in this Church."

Another entire evening was devoted to the exhausting debate on the question.

A second amendment was proposed by Rev. I. Hetherington, and seconded by Rev. W. J. Gillespie—"That as there exists great diversity of opinion in this Assembly on the subject of marriage with a deceased wife's sister, and it is desirable on that account that the members should have fuller time for the investigation of the subject, the Assembly refrains for the present from deciding as to the report, and remits the report to the Presbyteries for consideration, to report to next Assembly ; it being understood that meanwhile no minister or member of this Church shall celebrate or contract such a marriage."

After such full and elaborate discussion, it was judged expedient that speaking should close, and the vote be taken. The result was that the motion was carried by sixty-one to twenty-three.

The rules for administering the Infirm Ministers' Fund underwent very careful and deliberate consideration. Repeated references were made to the judgment of Sessions and Presbyteries, extending over a number of meetings of the General Assembly. And it was not till the meeting of 1874 that a fixed agreement had been reached. In the meantime, each application was decided on its

merits. In the present year the rules of administration were substantially settled, and were confirmed the year after.

These were—

1st. "That all ministers be required to pay their contribution of £25 to the fund in five years.

2nd. "That the recommendation of the Committee, that 'a further rate of £2 per annum be required from all ministers after their payment of contribution of £25,' be for the present disapproved.

3rd. "That the recommendation of the Committee, that 'the term of service required of all participants in the benefits of the fund be ten years instead of five years,' be disapproved.

4th. "That the recommendation of the Presbytery of Melbourne, that the words 'may assign,' in Rule 6 be altered to 'shall assign,' be approved, subject to the provision in Rule 8."

It was then moved—"That the sum of £100 in Rule 6 be altered to £50, and the sum of £150 in the same rule be altered to £100." This motion to be submitted to Presbyteries.

Finally it was resolved to grant an annuity to the claimant from the Fund of £50, with £2 additional for every year of service over five years which he had so served, until his annuity reaches the maximum amount of £100."

A number of applications from congregations continued to be made for authority to sell or mortgage their Church properties.

The congregation at Springs, Mount Bolton, wished leave to let on lease their school site and school property. It was agreed that the Trustees were competent of themselves to enter into the lease, seeing it was only for a limited period.

Learmonth congregation obtained authority to sell their school site and teacher's house, and to apply the proceeds to the erection of a new Church.

The congregation at Cranbourne got authority to sell their school property, and to apply the proceeds to the reduction of debt on the manse, and to the repairing of the Church and the manse.

It was agreed to allow the congregation at Trentham to sell their school property, and to apply the proceeds to the liquidation of debt on their Church.

The Greenhills congregation, Kyneton, were permitted to sell the whole of their school property, and to apply part of the proceeds to the purchase of another site, the remainder to be applied to the erection of a Church.

Williamstown congregation obtained power to sell or mortgage a part of their Church site to the extent of three roods, and to apply the proceeds to the liquidation of the debt on the property, and the enlargement of their place of worship on condition that they should otherwise reduce the debt resting on them by a contribution of £600 within the next two years.

The congregation at Wangaratta got liberty to mortgage their manse site and five acres of land to the extent of £200, the amount to be applied to the erection of a new manse on another site.

The united congregations of Heidelberg and Janefield were authorised to mortgage their manse property at Northcote, the proceeds to be applied to the erection of the manse.

Authority was granted to the Union Church, North Melbourne, to sell three roods of their Church site, the proceeds to be applied to the liquidation of debt on the property, the enlargement of the Church, and the erection of a new school, on condition that the congregation should raise at least £500 towards the work.

The Eaglehawk congregation were permitted to sell the Government site for a Church, and to apply the proceeds to the enlargement of the manse and the improvement of the Church.

The congregation at Melton obtained power to sell their manse property, and to place the proceeds in the bank, together with £45 now in the hands of the Trustees, as a reserve fund for the erection of a manse when required.

The congregation of Windermere were allowed to sell a part of their Church property, together with the school property erected thereon, and to apply the proceeds to the erection of a new Church.

The congregations of Port Albert and Tarraville were authorised to take down their Church at Port Albert, to sell the materials, and to apply the proceeds to the improvement of their manse at Tarraville.

Erskine Church, Carlton, got authority to substitute certain other plans for those formally submitted for their new Church, manse, and school-house, and to mortgage their property to the amount of £1,000, to be applied to the work.

In connection with these extensive property arrangements, it was resolved to appoint a Standing Committee on sales and mortgages, whose duty should be to take charge of all matters connected with the disposal of Church properties, and to see that the decisions of the Assembly with reference to such matters be carried into effect.

The announcement was made that Mrs. Colonel Robertson, of Connewarre, had intimated her intention to convey to Trustees forty-eight acres of land near the township of Petersborough, Curdie's River, to be used as a glebe in connection with the Presbyterian Church in that district.

It was agreed that the River Coliban should form the boundary between the Presbytery of Castlemaine and the Presbytery of Macedon and Werribee.

It was reported that the uninvested capital of the Church amounted at present to £8,362, and that of this amount the sum of £4,500 was deposited in the Colonial Bank, at the ordinary rate of bank interest, and that the sum of £3,762 was lodged in the Colonial Bank without interest.

Mr. W. P. Muir resigned his office as Treasurer.

It was resolved by the Assembly that the congregation at Murchison be received into connection with this Church; that Mr. T. B. Swift be admitted as a missionary in charge of the congregation; and that the Presbytery of Melbourne be instructed to take steps

for his ordination, with a view to his being placed in the position of an ordained missionary of the Church.

It was agreed "that an earnest effort should be made to obtain from the Home Churches a regular supply of suitable ministers; that the Home Mission Committee be instructed to address an urgent appeal to these Churches for such ministers; that subscriptions be taken up by the Committee not later than the month of March next; and that a collection be made in all the Churches not later than September next to provide the necessary funds, it being understood that no more than £75 shall be given towards the passage of any minister."

The duties of the Committee on Investments and Finance were defined :—

1. "To advise with the Treasurer as to his various duties.
2. "To invest the capital belonging to the Assembly funds on undoubted security.
3. "To care for the safety of the money in the hands of the Treasurer.
4. "To see that the several collections ordered by the Assembly are statedly made, and remitted to the Treasurer.
5. "To take order that the Assembly accounts are all duly vouched, audited, and published.
6. "And generally to watch over the money interests of the Church."

The Committee appointed to nominate the Treasurer and to define the duties and remuneration of the General Secretary recommended—"That the office of Treasurer be combined with the office of General Secretary; that the duty of the General Secretary shall be to convene the meetings of all Standing Committees on instructions from the conveners, to keep the minutes of these meetings, and to conduct all correspondence arising therefrom; that there be a monthly audit of accounts; that no cheque be paid unless signed by the Treasurer and the Convener of the Committee, whose funds are being drawn upon, and that no portion of the funds which are lying in the bank in connection with the Committee on Investments and Finance be drawn unless through cheques signed by the Treasurer and two of the Trustees; that a sum not exceeding £300 be kept as a floating balance in the bank; that the Secretary receive £210 per annum as his salary as Secretary, and £150 per annum as Treasurer, on condition that he provide himself with an efficient clerk; and that the Treasurer and his clerk furnish guarantees for their integrity." The recommendations were adopted.

The Assembly agreed that this Church should co-operate with sister Churches holding the Westminster Standards with the view of bringing about an Œcumenical Council of these Churches, to consider subjects of common interest to them all, and especially to promote harmony of action in connection with the work of missions at home and abroad.

In regard to the scheme for co-operation with the Church of England, after considering returns from Presbyteries, it was agreed—

"That this Church, while approving of co-operation with the evangelical ministers of all Protestant denominations, does not fee called on to give any formal sanction to the proposed scheme."

The report respecting missions among the Aborigines and Chinese presented some interesting particulars. There were thirty-four to forty-two baptised members in the native Church at Ramahyuck Aboriginal Station. There were nineteen communicants. Two religious services were held in the Church every day throughout the year. The Lord's Day was kept in an exemplary manner, and family worship was regularly observed.

The school continued to prosper. The Government Inspector reported as follows:—"The school has again passed an excellent examination. This is the first case since the present result system has been in force that 100 per cent. of marks has been gained by any school in the Colony."

At another examination the inspector reported—"Three children —aged fifteen, thirteen, and eleven respectively—have passed the standard of education."

Another aboriginal station, at Coranderrk, on the Upper Yarra, was frequently visited by the Convener. He had often preached to the natives. About one hundred and twenty are settled there. During the preceding ten years twenty marriages had been celebrated in the Christian form. The Lord's Supper and baptism had been dispensed. About thirty children attend day school. The manager, a Christian man and a Presbyterian, holds two religious services among them every day.*

As to the Chinese, it was reported that there were about 17,000 in the Colony, and this Church had at present only two agents, both labouring at Ballaarat. About fifty or sixty attended the Sabbath services. Three catechumens there attended a Bible Class. There were five converts connected with the Presbyterian Church in the same locality. Four were desirous of assuming the Christian profession. A Bible Class was formed in Fitzroy, and a number were attending regularly, and were eager to understand the Scriptures. One of them had been baptised and admitted to the membership of the Napier-street Church—James Ah Kee. Another, who studied several years at the Scotch College, and who afterwards passed the matriculation examination at the University—Cheok Hong Cheong —also joined the membership of the Fitzroy Church at the same time. Every Lord's Day these two went out together on a missionary tour among their heathen countrymen, chiefly in the lanes of the city.

The debt of the mission was reduced during the year by about £60, but a very embarrassing amount, £335 15s. 8½d., remained.

Rev. J. G. Paton, of Aniwa, and Rev. J. Goodwill, of Santa, both addressed the Assembly on the subject of missions to the New Hebrides.

* See remarks on the origin of the aboriginal tribes of Australia, and an account of some of their religious traditions, which were ascertained by careful and searching inquiry, in appendix (E).

Rev. W. Bannerman, of Clutha, New Zealand, addressed the Assembly as representative of the Synod of Otago.

Rev. J. S. Chambers, labouring as an ordained missionary of this Church, was allowed to connect himself with the Widows and Orphans' Fund on the same footing as ministers.

Events of the Year.—1874.

The Presbyterians resident at Anderson's Creek, having made application for a supply of service, were placed under the pastoral care of Rev. A. Mackie.

Rev. J. Summers was relieved of his charge of Dargalong in consequence of impaired health, and the Rev. Mr. Swift was appointed in his stead, inasmuch as Dargalong lay more conveniently for Murchison than for Nagambie.

Rev. J. H. Archibald had left Victoria for America, and, at his request, a certificate of his ordination, ministerial standing, and character was forwarded to his address.

March.—The much lamented death of Rev. P. S. Menzies was announced. His decease occasioned universal grief.*

In consequence of impaired health and usefulness, Rev. H. Darling tendered the resignation of his charge at Emerald Hill. A congregational meeting had been held, and mutually satisfactory arrangements had been agreed upon between minister and people.

A deplorable case of Sabbath desecration occurred, in which the Christian feeling of the community was outraged. The matter was all the more to be lamented, inasmuch as the open defiance of sacred, as well as of civil law, was done under the authority of the Commissioner of Railways. A train conveyed upwards of 1,500 railway *employés* to Mount Macedon for a picnic on the Lord's Day. Booths were erected, intoxicating drinks sold, and dancing indulged in to the strains of a brass band. The Presbytery agreed to memorialise the Government on the subject of such disgraceful proceedings, and a Committee was appointed to wait on the Chief Secretary, and use all influence to prevent any repetition of so shameful an occurrence. A protest was presented to the Chief Secretary against such a glaring violation of the constitutional law of the Colony, as well as of the divine authority.

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*Memorial Minute.

His gifts were manifold and of rare excellence. His intellectual powers were vigorous, his affections warm, his manner kindly and engaging. His fine abilities were commended by the winning grace of his character. Earnest and powerful as a preacher, he was yet gentle and unassuming, unselfish, open, and guileless as a child, and in consequence, while he was much admired, he was greatly beloved by all who knew him. His mind had been carefully cultivated and richly furnished. He was equally eminent in literary accomplishments and in eloquence of expression. His discourses were remarkable for the freshness of his thoughts and the felicitous flow of his language, while the burning zeal with which he spoke not only touched, but captivated, the hearts of his hearers. While the dew of his youth was yet upon him, and his ministry was brightening with promise, he was called to his rest and his crown in the heavenly kingdom.

June.—A large number of Presbyterians in Kew and neighbourhood took action in order to receive a regular supply of divine service, and to be organised as a Christian Church under the supervision of the Melbourne Presbytery.

Another Conference was held by the Melbourne Presbytery on the state of religion.

July.—A communication from Rev. T. B. Swift was received by the same Presbytery, setting forth the urgent claims of Toolamba, Mooroopna, Shepparton, and Kialla upon their attention, and offering to visit these districts and organise them into new charges, provided the Presbytery approved, and would send one of their number to preach for him two or three Sabbaths at Murchison, and otherwise counsel and assist him. Rev. R. Hamilton was appointed to visit the place, and aid Mr. Swift in the way deemed most desirable.

August.—The Trustees appointed for the Church property at Alexandra were the following:—Messrs. Robert William Sinclair Greig, Samuel Allardyce, and Thomas Hall.

A call was laid on the Presbytery table from Mornington, signed by forty members and adherents, in favour of Rev. J. Caldwell. The induction was effected on 27th inst.

In accordance with previous resolution, and as the result of deliberation, it was agreed to nominate, for the first chair in theology to be established in connection with the Divinity Hall, Rev. John Kerr, D.D., of the United Presbyterian Church, Glasgow.

October.—The Presbytery of Castlemaine had transmitted to the Melbourne Presbytery an application from Rev. T. Edwards to be admitted into the ministry of the Church, requesting this Presbytery to deal with it, because Mr. Edwards had been labouring for a number of years in connection with the Congregational body in East Melbourne, and was best known in the locality where he ministered. It appeared that he had been an ordained minister of the Congregational Church since 1860; that he had held two charges in England, and one in the Colony, in East Melbourne; that he held a high character for his educational attainments, personal piety, prudence, fidelity, and usefulness in the various departments of ministerial work; that in severing his connection with the Congregational denomination he had done so in the enjoyment of the confidence and esteem of his brethren, and that he had avowed the identity of his religious opinions with those of the Presbyterian Church, and gave full satisfaction to the Castlemaine Presbytery as to his views of ecclesiastical polity. The Presbytery agreed to transmit his application to the General Assembly with the accompanying documents.

The attention of the Presbytery was called to the children's demonstration which was held in the Royal Park on Sabbath preceding, in connection with the Hospital collection. The scene presented and the attendant circumstances were regarded as nothing short of aggravated Sabbath desecration, most objectionable in its character, and injurious in its influence. The tendency of

such unhallowed demonstrations would be to force the Christian Churches to withhold their support from highly useful and deserving institutions.

It was found there was a movement in the House of Assembly to throw open the Public Library and Museum on the Lord's Day. Against this proposal, it was resolved to send a petition praying that the motion may be rejected.

November.—A call had been laid on the table from the First Church, Dunedin, New Zealand, in favour of Rev. Lindsay Mackie, Elsternwick. It was signed by one hundred and ninety-five members and one hundred and thirty-five adherents. The promised stipend was £700 per annum and a manse. The invitation was accepted, and the Elsternwick pulpit was made vacant.

The Presbytery put on record their "deep affection for Mr. Mackie as a Christian brother, their high estimate of his intellectual gifts and scholarly attainments, their appreciation of his earnestness and ability as a preacher, and his fidelity in the discharge of pastoral work; their sense of the loss which the Church in Victoria sustains by his translation to another Colony, and their sincere prayer and hope that he may be long spared and eminently blessed in all his labours for the defence and propagation of the truth, the ingathering of souls to the fold, and the upbuilding and establishment of the Church of the Redeemer."

Attention was drawn to a general order which had issued from the Brigade Office, Victoria Barracks, setting forth the various trains that would run from up-country towns for the conveyance of volunteers and their horses to Melbourne on Sabbath, the 8th inst. This was regarded as a wanton desecration of the sacred day and an outrage on Christian feeling, and means were adopted both by deputation and memorial in order to testify against the proposed profanation, and, if possible, prevent the perpetration of the evil.

It was at the same time recorded, in gratitude to God, that the recent attempt to open the Public Library and Museum on the Sabbath had been defeated, and that a large majority of the members of the Legislative Assembly had given their vote and support in favour of the due observance of the Lord's Day.

Attention was called to the vacancy that had occurred in the pastorate of the congregation of South Yarra, in consequence of the election by the General Assembly of Rev. George Tait to the Principalship of the Ladies' College, and his acceptance of the same. The congregation were taken by surprise, and felt somewhat aggrieved at the summary action of the Assembly in dissolving the tie between pastor and people, without giving the latter an opportunity of expressing their mind.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 5TH MAY, 1874.

REV. W. S. LOGIN, MODERATOR.

Induction—Rev. W. Thom, M.A.—Ballan, Egerton, and Gordons.
,, ,, A. W. Sinclair—Golden-square Church, Sandhurst.
,, ,, A. Robb—Koroit.

Translation	—Rev.	J. B. Reid—Eaglehawk.
,,	,,	C. J. Baird—St. Andrew's Church, Geelong.
Resignation	,,	M. Dixon—Smeaton and Mount Prospect.
,,	,,	J. Caldwell—Maryborough.
,,	,,	J. T. Cameron, M.A.—Rosedale, Denison, and Walhalla.
,,	,,	J. W. Lawson—Portland.
,,	,,	H. Darling—Clarendon-street Church, Emerald Hill.
,,	,,	W. Hamilton, M.A.—Mortlake.
,,	,,	D. Kay—Wickliffe, Chatsworth, and Hexham.
Death	,,	P. S. Menzies, M.A., colleague—Scots Church, Melbourne.

There were seventeen items of business.

It was agreed to make a record* of the death of Rev. W. M'Clure, of Londonderry, Ireland, in whom the Irish Presbyterian Church had lost a faithful and distinguished minister, and who for many years had actively promoted the interests of this Church, as Convener of the Irish Colonial Committee.

The erection of a college or residence on the University reserve was initiated. It was recommended to the Theological Hall Committee to issue a prospectus, and ascertain the amount of support the scheme was likely to receive from the members of the Church.

The feeling in the Commission was not yet unanimous in regard to the appointment of a Theological Professor. It was agreed, however, to instruct the Presbyteries to nominate one according to the regulations adopted by the Assembly in 1869.

Rev. R. T. Walker, M.A., was nominated for the Moderatorship next year.

Many of the members of Assembly continued to be deeply interested in the reviving of God's cause in the Church and throughout the community. It was agreed :—

1. "That the Presbyteries be recommended again to meet in conference this year, for the purpose of specially considering what may be done for the revival of religion.

2. "That the brethren be exhorted to associate and co-operate with those of other denominations for the carrying out of plans that may seem most likely to accomplish the same important end.

3. "That the ministers, congregations, and members of this Church be invited to special prayer, on some evening of each week, for similar visitations of blessing to our own Church and Colony as have been enjoyed in the mother country."

The Clarendon-street Church, Emerald Hill, were authorised, on the conditions laid down for all, to mortgage their Church property to the extent of £800—£250 to be expended in the purchase of the house occupied as a manse, £450 to clear off the debt on the Church, and £100 to be expended in the repair and improvement of the manse, Church, and grounds.

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* Memorial Minute.

* The Commission would record a grateful sense of the deep interest which he at all times took in the prosperity of this Church, his untiring efforts in diffusing information regarding the necessities of the Colony, and the earnestness and success with which he laboured to obtain suitable ministers.

The congregation at Russell's Bridge obtained authority to sell one acre and one rood of their Church land, with the school buildings thereon, the proceeds to be applied to the improvement of the other portions of the Church property,

The Trustees of the school at Mount Prospect received authority to sell their property, on condition that the amount for which the property shall be sold, and the purposes to which the proceeds should be applied, would be determined by the Committee on Sales and Mortgages.

It was reported that a deed of grant had been obtained from the Government, conveying the site of the Ladies' College to the Trustees appointed by the Assembly, and a letter had been received from these Trustees, undertaking to execute a Declaration of Trust, in which they should acknowledge that the site will be held by them for this Church, and subject every way to the jurisdiction of the Assembly. The Committee on the Ladies' College were then instructed to take steps for the appointment of a Principal for that institution, it being a condition of such appointment that the Principal be a member of the Presbyterian Church.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 10TH NOVEMBER, 1874.

REV. R. T. WALKER, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	M. Dixon—Scarsdale and Smythesdale.
,,	,,	R. K. Ewing—Beechworth.
,,	,,	J. Hay—Bright and Growler's Creek.
,,	,,	J. W. Lawson—Dunolly, Eddington, and Bet Bet.
,,	,,	G. Graham—Bacchus Marsh and Melton.
,,	,,	J. Caldwell—Mornington.
Translation	,,	J. Smeaton, M.A.—Maryborough.
,,	,,	H. C. Ellerman—Lismore.
Resignation	,,	J. Don—Coghill's Creek.
,,	,,	D. S. Brunton—Queenscliff.
,,	,,	L. Mackie—Elsternwick.

There were now one hundred and fifteen names of ministers on the roll.

It was required that the name of Rev. R. K. Ewing should not in the meantime be added to the roll till the Presbytery of Beechworth be heard in respect to it.

There were sixty-four items of business to come before the Assembly.

The Rev. T. Edwards, as recommended by the Melbourne Presbytery, was admitted to the ministry of the Church. He had been supplying for some time at Swan Hill.

An application was received from Rev. A. Stoker for admission as an ordained missionary of the Church. It appeared from the information given on the occasion, that Mr. Stoker had been ordained in 1863 a minister of the Independent Church at Rutherglen, in Victoria; that he had resigned his charge at that place in 1872, and had been employed since by the Presbyterian Church, chiefly in supplying at Inglewood, Derby, and Bridgewater; that

the united congregations were warmly attached to Mr. Stoker, and had forwarded a memorial to this Assembly, signed by one hundred and ninety members and adherents, praying that he be received into this Church, and that the Presbytery of Castlemaine, having had the case under consideration, unanimously resolved to recommend him to be received as an ordained missionary. The application was granted.

An application was made by the Presbytery of Hamilton for authority to ordain Mr. G. D. Lee as a missionary of this Church. He had the support of a memorial signed by sixty members and adherents of the Body. The prayer of the memorial was recommended by the Presbytery. The application was granted, but steps were taken in order that the law respecting the status of an ordained missionary might be properly defined.

Progress continued to be made towards the establishment of the Ladies' College. It was ascertained from the report of proceedings that the sum of £1,000 had been given to the Trustees of the College by Mr. David Young, on behalf of the former Trustees; that the new Trustees, as instructed at the last Assembly, had borrowed the sum of £5,000 on the mortgage of the site; that a contract had been accepted by them for the erection of the College buildings at £7,500, and that, to provide for the completion of the buildings, an additional loan of £5,000 was required; that a declaration of Trust, as instructed at the last meeting of the Commission, had been signed by the Trustees; and that the Committee had under anxious consideration the nomination of a Principal for the College, and a Committee was appointed to secure that end.

It appeared that the nomination fell on Rev. George Tait, M.A., South Yarra. After a little consideration, he signified his acceptance of the Assembly's appointment. It was arranged that he should have the sole control of the finances, should receive all fees, pay all accounts, appoint and dismiss all teachers; in return for which he should pay to the Treasurer of the Church, in quarterly payments, the sum of £10 per centum per annum on the gross revenue derived from the fees, said percentage to be devoted to the payment of interest and building purposes—the Standing Committee on the Ladies' College to have the power of veto on the appointment, dismissal, or continued employment of teachers. The Standing Committee were under instruction to frame a Constitution for the College, and to exercise a general superintendence over the institution.

The case of the Rev. R. K. Ewing excited a great amount of interest. It formed one of the famous cases in the history of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. The discussion of the case drew forth some strong feeling among the members of Assembly, and indeed agitated the whole Church. The excitement of the occasion arose from the personal character and history of Mr. Ewing, and the circumstances surrounding his reputed connection with the Presbyterian ministry in Victoria. Mr. Ewing had been minister of the Presbyterian Church in Launceston, and was

distinguished for his attainments as a public speaker. He resigned, from whatever cause, his connection with the ministry and the Church in Tasmania, and took up his residence in South Yarra. There he kept an educational establishment, connected himself with the Presbyterian congregation, and was elected to the eldership. At length he resolved on seeking admission to the ministry. Before he was formally admitted by the Home Mission Committee, he took occasion to preach in pulpits as he found openings presented. Among these, he had the opportunity of officiating in the vacant charge of Beechworth and Stanley. The congregations, presuming that he was virtually, and soon would be actually, received into the fellowship of the ministry, gave him a call. The Presbytery on the same presumption sustained the call, and formally inducted him into the charge. Meanwhile, however, the Home Mission Committee declined to receive him into the ministry. Against their decision a protest and appeal brought the matter before the supreme court of the Church. The case was further complicated by two ministers of the Melbourne Presbytery who were present and were associated with the Beechworth Presbytery in the induction of Rev. R. K. Ewing, who was really not a minister of the Church.

The case was considered by the Assembly with closed doors. The appeal against the decision of the Home Mission Committee, declining to admit Mr. Ewing, was dismissed. It was decided to hear the reasons which induced the Home Mission Committee to refuse the application. This opened up the whole question, and gave the matter a serious aspect. The decision was—

"That the Assembly sustain the action of the Committee, find that Rev. R. K. Ewing is not a minister of this Church—find that the Presbytery of Beechworth in inducting Mr. Ewing acted contrary to the laws of the Church, and are hereby admonished for their irregularity."

The two ministers who countenanced the induction were found to have offended against the Rules and Regulations of the Church, and against its unity and peace, and required to be admonished from the chair. The one submitted, but the other left the Court, declining its jurisdiction. Unfortunately, "refusing to obey the Assembly's citation, he was adjudged guilty of contempt, aggravated by repeated evidences of a spirit of insubordination, and it was resolved, he should be suspended from all his judicial functions in the congregation, session, and other courts of the Church, until he should unreservedly express regret for his offences and submit to the admonition of the Moderator."

The right of membership in the Presbytery of Mortlake was assigned to Rev. W. Hamilton, formerly of Mortlake, now retired.

The Scotch College continued to achieve good results. The number of pupils was three hundred and forty, and the revenue for the year was £9,803 ; of this amount £1,225 was paid to the Assembly for the reduction of debt on the institution and other expenses. Special thanks were given to the Principal for the liberal terms on which, from time to time, he had made advances of money towards

the improvement of the buildings, and more particularly for his donation of £1,450, which was simply to bear interest at 4 per cent. during the term of his principalship, and thereafter to be handed over free of all obligations to the Church.

A letter was read, dated 27th May, 1873, from the Moderator and the stated Clerks of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, and from the Rev. Dr. M'Cosh, President of the College of New Jersey, Princeton, relative to a General Council of all Presbyterian Churches, to be held when and where it may be afterwards determined.

An overture on the same subject from the Presbytery of Melbourne was read and adopted.

Events of the Year.—1875.

February.—The first meeting of the Melbourne Presbytery in the new year was opened by a solemn announcement. The Rev. A. Robertson, West Melbourne, had been removed by death in circumstances of unusual solemnity. He had suddenly dropped down and expired. A deputation from the congregation applied for a supply of pulpit service, and the appointment of a Moderator of Session.

Rev. A. D. Kininmont applied for leave of absence on account of impaired health, with a view to his restoration. His application was supported by the recommendation of the Session. He would require a month or more. Great sympathy was manifested towards Mr. Kininmont and his family in their present affliction, and especially under the severe and painful accident, through burning, which had befallen a daughter, and was the occasion of her death.

March.—It was agreed to frame a minute relative to the late Rev. A. Robertson, to the effect as subjoined.*

Attention was called to the duty of thankfulness for the abundant harvest, and also for the mitigation of the epidemic by which the community had recently been visited.

April.—A call issued from the West Melbourne congregation in favour of Rev. John Garrow Stobbs. The call was accepted by letter, and the induction was effected on 29th inst.

A letter from Rev. S. A. Hamilton conveyed the information that by previous arrangement he had preached at Dandenong to a numerous congregation, and had met with much encouragement in forming a new cause there.

It was reported that a call from the Clarendon-street congregation, Emerald Hill, was brought out in favour of Rev. Alexander

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* Memorial Minute.

As a Presbyter, Mr. Robertson took a lively interest in all matters which came before the Court, and by his intimate knowledge of ecclesiastical law proved eminently serviceable in helping to bring to a successful issue many difficult cases on which the Presbytery had to pronounce a judgment. As a preacher he was faithful in expounding and applying the fundamental principles of our holy faith, and as a man he was open, frank, and generous with his brethren.

F. Knox. It was numerously signed, and was at once accepted by Mr. Knox. The induction took place on 10th May.

Cheok Hong Cheong was introduced to the Presbytery as a Chinese student, who had passed the matriculation examination at the University, and was desirous of entering the Theological Hall. He was son of the former Chinese Missionary of the Church, Peng Nam, and was a member of the Napier-street congregation, Fitzroy.

Mr. W. M. M. Alexander was also introduced as a matriculated student who had passed with credit, and who wished to enter the Theological Hall. It was agreed that they should be handed over to the Examination Board.

June.—A call came out from the South Yarra congregation in favour of Rev. Alexander Brims, recently arrived, and admitted to the Church. The call was signed by one hundred and forty-eight members, and sixty-seven adherents. Mr. Brims not having accomplished his three months' probation, he was not competent to accept at once. At the meeting next month, however, he accepted the call, then passed through the necessary examinations, and on 15th August was ordained and inducted.

July.—The attention of the Presbytery was called to the unexpected and lamented death of the Rev. I. Hetherington. Out of respect to the memory of the deceased, the Presbytery agreed to adjourn for a week. It was afterwards agreed to put a minute in the permanent record, expressive of the affection and esteem of the brethren towards him. It was to the effect as given below.*

Rev. P. S. Mercer reported that he had arranged to preach in the schoolroom at Euroke once a month, at the earnest wish of the residents of the district.

Application was made on behalf of Mr. William Corrie Johnston to be admitted into the Theological Hall. The Presbytery of Dunedin certified that he had passed the various examinations prescribed to students of the second year, and had entered on the third year of his course. He was highly commended. He was admitted as a student of the fourth year.

August.—It was agreed to send a preacher to Shepparton, Violet Town, Euroa, and Duck Ponds.

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* Memorial Minute.

The death of Mr. Hetherington has made a breach among the brethren which will not be easily filled up. The Presbytery, in its deliberations, could always calculate on Mr. Hetherington's sound principle, great practical knowledge, long colonial experience, and thorough brotherliness. He was a father to the younger members, and took a deep interest in the prosperity of every minister and congregation in the Church. As a preacher, he was an able minister of the New Testament, rightly dividing the word of truth, and as a pastor was faithful, tender, and diligent. In his inner life, he was a man of prayer, and the brethren much enjoyed, when they had the opportunity, the outpouring of his heart to God. The Presbytery feel that Mr. Hetherington laid the Church under many deep obligations in the beginning of its history by his great labours on its behalf, and that the example, which he has left behind him to the office-bearers of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, is one of Christian purpose, activity, and consistency.

September.—In connection with the subject of the State of Religion, it was recommended that a meeting of elders and Christian workers, connected with the congregations of the Presbytery, should be held with a view to the reviving of the Church. The meeting was held on 19th October.

A call had issued from the congregation of Elsternwick in favour of Rev. Joseph Hay. Having accepted the call, which was conveyed through the Presbytery of Beechworth to the Presbytery of Melbourne, he was duly inducted into the charge at Elsternwick on 20th September.

The congregation of the Scots Church, Collins-street, brought out a call, to which two hundred and fifty signatures were attached, in favour of Rev. Charles Strong, recently of Glasgow, Scotland. Mr. Strong accepted the call, and was in due course inducted on 21st September. At the close of the induction service, Mr. Strong engaged, according to rule and practice, to sign the formula of the Church when called upon to do so, and to become a contributor to the Widows and Orphans' Fund and to the Infirm Ministers' Fund.

October.—The students in theology, Messrs. W. Thomson, W. L. Morton, A. Mackie, and W. C. Johnston had finished their course of study in the hall, and under the authority of the Assembly would be licensed to preach the gospel.

The Rev. J. G. Paton, from the New Hebrides mission field, was present at the meeting of Presbytery, and gave an address. The Presbytery cordially welcomed him, rejoiced to find his health so far restored, thanked him for his eloquent and impressive address, and recommended that he should have free access to their pulpits to plead the cause of the mission before their congregations.

Rev. Joseph Wood had tendered the resignation of his charge of the North Carlton congregation, and, with the congregation acquiescing, the pastoral tie was dissolved. The Presbytery expressed their sense of the loss sustained by the Church, through his removal from the Colony. He was characterised by soundness in the faith, superior abilities and attainments, and true earnestness in his Master's work.

November.—The Rev. Dr. Cairns having resigned his charge of Chalmers Church, the Presbytery agreed to record their sense of the loss which they sustained in his resignation, their appreciation of the great services he had rendered to the cause of gospel truth, and to the Presbyterian Church, during so many years. Arriving in this land at a critical period in its history, he helped to rally the followers of Christ, doing good service in defence of Holy Scripture, the doctrines of grace, and the sanctity of the Christian Sabbath.

December.—The congregation at Kew had agreed on a call to the Rev. D. S. Maxwell. The call was cordially accepted, and the induction was effected on the 20th inst.

CHAPTER X.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 4th May, 1875.

Rev. R. T. Walker, Moderator.

Induction—Rev.		R. G. Taylor, ordained—Smeaton and Mount Prospect.
,,	,,	E. Gray, B.A.—North-west Wimmera.
,,	,,	J. G. Stobbs, M.A.—West Melbourne.
Resignation	,,	F. T. Jenkin—Mansfield.
,,	,,	C. J. Cameron, M.A.—Daylesford.
,,	,,	J. Hampshire—Majorca, Carisbrook, and Craigie.
,,	,,	R. Henderson—Kyneton, Greenhills, and Malmsbury.
,,	,,	G. Tait, M.A., relieved (appointed Principal of the Ladies' College, Melbourne)—South Yarra.
Death	,,	A. Robertson—West Melbourne.

There were twenty-five items in the programme of business.

The rules for the distribution of the Reserve Fund were the following :—

1. "That no grants shall be given for the purchase of sites which cost less than £50.

2. "That no grant shall exceed £100, or be more than one-half of the cost of the site.

3. "That no grant shall be voted to any site, unless it has been previously approved by the Presbytery of the bounds.

4. "That all sites for which grants are given must be placed in trust for the Presbyterian Church of Victoria."

The Commission recorded encouraging testimony as to the good results which accrued from the efforts made to elevate the tone of spiritual life in the Church. A cheerful response had been given to their recommendations of last year by many of the Presbyteries, as well as by the ministers of the Church. Special thanks were awarded to Mr. Andrew Scott for the opportune liberality with which he provided for the revival intelligence from Home being circulated throughout the Church. Humble thanksgiving was rendered for the continuance and extension of that sacred movement throughout the British Isles ; and ministers and people were entreated to abound in prayer more and more, that the Lord in this time may hasten such visitation of blessing to themselves.

Rev. F. R. M. Wilson was nominated as Moderator for next Assembly.

The Committee of the Infirm Ministers' Fund reported that Rev. J. Hampshire had received a medical certificate to the effect that he was wholly incapacitated by severe and hopeless disease from the performance of ministerial labour.

It had been deemed expedient to inquire into the character and management of the Model Sabbath-school at Buninyong. Mr. Allen, an elder of the Church, had originated the scheme, and enthusias-

tically wrought it out. A Committee had visited the school, and reported the superior arrangements and management of the school, and the generally satisfactory progress of the pupils.

A very special emergency had occurred in the experience of the Chinese Mission. The only two agents lately in the service of the Church had left the Colony, one for Singapore, the other for China. The Church was without a missionary to the Colonial Chinese heathen. There was no qualified agent within sight who could be taken with any confidence into the vacant office. In the Providence of God, however, arrangements were opened up, whereby, without taxing the resources of the mission, or adding to its burdens, a training class might be formed to prepare a number of Chinese converts for mission work.

The Commission, after taking time for deliberation, declared that they were impressed with the importance of having Chinese catechists in future instructed and trained for their work; that they rejoiced to learn that six Christian Chinese of approved character and ability were desirous of being so trained; and that Mr. Cheong, a student in our Theological Hall, had placed his services as interpreter at the disposal of the Church. The Commission authorised the Committee to take steps to institute a Chinese Mission Seminary, to engage the services of Mr. Cheong, and to incur an expenditure in the case not exceeding £400 per annum, and appoint the Convener, Rev. R. Hamilton, to undertake the work of tuition so far as his pastoral duties will permit, and after a little experience arrangements could be matured.

Mr. W. S. Rolland obtained permission to attend the Theological Hall classes.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, PRO RE NATA MEETING, 27TH JULY, 1875.

REV. R. T. WALKER, MODERATOR.

The meeting was called in terms of a requisition addressed to the Moderator, the requisition having been signed by one-fifth of the members of Assembly, and all belonging to five Presbyteries.

The object of this extraordinary meeting was to make arrangements, rendered necessary by the lamented death of the Rev. Irving Hetherington, for filling the office of Clerk of the Assembly.

It was unanimously agreed to appoint Rev. J. Nish to act as successor to Mr. Hetherington in the office of the Clerkship; and a Committee was appointed to consider the permanent measures which ought to be adopted relative to the management of the Assembly's business.

The Interim Clerk, the General Secretary, and the Law Agent were authorised to obtain from the representatives of the late Rev. I. Hetherington all books, papers, and other property belonging to this Assembly.

It was agreed to prepare a minute relative to the death of the Assembly Clerk, and to insert it in the permanent record.*

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 9TH NOVEMBER, 1875.

REV. F. R. M. WILSON, MODERATOR.

Induction—Rev.	J. E. Armour—Miners' Rest and Coghill's Creek.
,,	,,	A. Brims, M.A., B.D.—South Yarra.
,,	,,	J. Don—Kyneton and Greenhills.
,,	,,	A. F. Knox—Clarendon-street, Emerald Hill.
,,	,,	Charles Strong—Scots Church, Melbourne.
,,	,,	J. Groundwater—South Gippsland.
,,	,,	D. S. Brunton—Tylden and Trentham.
Translation ,,		Joseph Hay—Elsternwick.
,,	,,	A. C. Smith—Daylesford and Franklinford.
Resignation ,,		J. M'Roberts—Branxholme and Eumerella.
,,	,,	J. W. M'Cutchan—Sebastopol.
,,	,,	J. Wood—North Carlton.

There were one hundred and seventeen ministers in office, and twenty-two vacancies and stations, four of which were occupied by ordained missionaries, and twelve settlements of ministers had been effected during the year.

There were forty-nine items of business to come before the meeting.

It was agreed that a clerk of Assembly be appointed at a salary of £60 a year, and an assistant at £25. A convener of the Business Committee, an agent for the loan fund, a hall-keeper, and an Assembly officer should be appointed.

A resolution was adopted to send a letter to the Venerable the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the Dominion of

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* MEMORIAL MINUTE.

The Assembly, in recording the death of their late Clerk, feel constrained to express their high sense of the unwearied diligence and unbending conscientiousness with which he fulfilled the duties of his office. He was eminently a brother beloved. Occupying for many years a position of great influence, he was singularly courteous and unassuming. Deeply interested in all that concerned the general welfare of the Church, he grudged no pains in discharging the duties laid upon him, which, though frequently onerous, were at all times cheerfully undertaken. He was an earnest and faithful preacher, and specially assiduous in his kindly and sympathetic attention to the sick and needy. Notably unpretentious in his benevolence, he could never listen unmoved to any tale of woe. Possessing an intimate knowledge of the laws of the Church, and warmly attached to her polity, he rendered eminent service by the part which he took in the business alike of the Presbytery and of the General Assembly. The Union of the various sections of Presbyterianism in the Colony, so happily effected in 1859, was largely promoted through his instrumentality, and such was his catholicity of spirit that he was held in high esteem by brethren of all evangelical denominations. His memory is fondly revered by all his fellow-workers in the ministry and eldership. Would that their warmly cherished remembrance of his worth may stimulate them to increased diligence in the service which he performed so devotedly and loved so well. The Assembly have further to record their heartfelt sympathy with his bereaved family, and would prayerfully commend them to the care of Him who is the Father of the fatherless, and the shield of the orphaned.

Canada, recording their brotherly congratulations on the occasion of the Union of the Presbyterian Churches, so grandly and thoroughly consummated last June in Montreal.

The Rev. Dr. M'Cosh, of Princeton, America, had originated the idea of representatives of all Presbyterian Churches in the world holding a General Council, with a view to testimony, mutual encouragement, and the advancement of the cause of Christ. The object was to form a Presbyterian Alliance, to be known as "The Alliance of the Reformed Churches throughout the world, holding the Presbyterian system." Papers would be read, addresses delivered and published, and information circulated respecting the allied Churches and their Missions. The Churches in Australia, among the rest, were asked if they would send delegates. The first meeting would be held in Edinburgh, in the month of July, 1876. The time was afterwards changed to 1877.

It was resolved, among a variety of propositions, that Rev. Drs. Cairns and M'Donald should be appointed as delegates to represent the Church of Victoria. It was also agreed that Messrs. T. Russell, A. Scott, J. Balfour, and C. Wilson be elected to act as representative elders for this Church in the Council. The rule of representation would admit of six representatives, and three of the elders were in the Home country. Arrangements were made for defraying the expenses of delegates without involving the Assembly in pecuniary responsibility.

An important resolution was adopted, recognising the importance of the cultivation of friendly relations among the various Evangelical Churches in the Colony. It was resolved to open communication with the Supreme Courts of the various denominations, with a view to arranging, if practicable, for an occasional interchange of delegates, and the establishment of a fuller and more systematic co-operation than at present obtains, among the different religious Bodies.

A memorial was submitted from the congregations of Beechworth and Stanley, expressing their desire that Rev. R. K. Ewing should be recognised as a minister of this Church, and be settled among them as their pastor.

A memorial was also presented from Rev. R. K. Ewing. This was heard *ex gratia*, and he was permitted to be heard in support of its prayer.

A Committee on the case had reported that, as advised by the law agent, if the General Assembly decides upon taking active legal measures to compel obedience on the part of the congregations to its decision, there will be no difficulty in so doing, but further forbearance was counselled.

The resolution adopted was, that, in the event of Mr. Ewing submitting himself to the decision of last Assembly, and withdrawing from the congregations of Beechworth and Stanley, he should have an opportunity of renewing his application for admission to this Church, and that a Commission be appointed to deal with such application.

Rev. J. G. Paton, of the New Hebrides Mission, addressed the Assembly relative to the progress of the work in the islands and the need for additional labourers. The Assembly gave him thanks, and rejoiced that his health was so far restored that he could undertake the work of visiting congregations and Sabbath-schools.

An application was made by Rev. J. G. Wilson, formerly a minister of the Congregational Union of Victoria, recommended by the Presbytery of Ballaarat, for admission into the ministry of the Church. A letter from Rev. A. Gosman, of the Congregational Union, testified that Mr. Wilson had been twelve years a fully recognised minister of that denomination. He had been educated at Cavendish Theological Institute, Manchester, under the tutorial management of Rev. Dr. Parker, now of London. From the time of his arrival, in 1863, he had been engaged in the work of the Christian ministry. He was held in the highest esteem by those among whom he laboured. Having resigned his connection, and intimated his intention of joining the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, he was cordially recommended as a man of fair culture, whose moral and religious character was unexceptionable, and who had had many evidences of his success as a preacher of the gospel.

The application was approved.

It appeared that twelve students attended the Theological Hall. They were instructed in Biblical Criticism, the Sacred Languages, Church History, Systematic Theology, and Apologetics. The Professors expressed their general satisfaction with the conduct, attendance, and progress of the students. Six of these had completed their course of study, and were prepared to take license as ministers of this Church.

The Assembly expressed much satisfaction at the large increase in the number of the students, and agreed to record their sincere thanks to an anonymous donor of £1,000, who signified his desire that this contribution should form the foundation of an endowment for a second chair of Theology.

It is important to notice the changes which Church property gradually underwent, and the improvement it sustained in consequence of the State-aid Abolition Bill granting so much liberty to the congregations and the Church Assembly.

The Trustees of the Church site at Wodonga were authorised to sell it, and to apply the proceeds to the purchase of another one in a more eligible position.

The Trustees of St. Andrew's Church, Geelong, got permission to sell one acre of the reserve belonging to the congregation, and to apply the proceeds towards the improvement and enlargement of the Church.

The Trustees of the Warrnambool Church got liberty to mortgage the manse property to the amount of £1,000, the proceeds to be applied towards the erection of their new Church.

The Trustees of the Church property at Mount Beckwith were empowered to sell the site granted by Government, and to apply

the proceeds to the purchase of another one which they considered more eligible.

The Trustees of the Church property at Sutherland's Creek obtained leave to sell the school, and to apply the proceeds to the erection of their new Church.

The Trustees of the High Church, Geelong, obtained liberty to sell a portion of their reserve, having 117 feet frontage to Myers-street, and to apply the proceeds to the erection of a manse and a vestry, on condition that not less than £1,000 be spent on these buildings.

The Trustees of the Church property at Duneed got authority to sell the school, together with the specified portion of the Church site, and to apply the proceeds to the erection of a new Church.

The Trustees of the property at Mount Rowan obtained authority to dispose of an acre and a half of land, together with the school-house erected thereon, to the Educational Department, the proceeds to be applied to the liquidation of the debt on the Church at Miners' Rest.

The Trustees of the Church property at Epping were authorised to sell a portion of their Church lands, the proceeds to be applied to the improving and enlarging of the Church.

In regard to the Missions to the Chinese and the Aborigines, the Assembly rejoiced to learn that Mr. Hagenauer's work among the aborigines at Ramahyuck continued to receive the divine blessing. They commended the members who had exerted themselves so zealously for the maintenance of the seminary for the Chinese, and the liquidation of the debt which had hung so long on the missions.

The Assembly cordially sanctioned the establishment of the Chinese Seminary, rejoiced in the evidence afforded that there is the prospect of an efficient agency being employed to evangelise the Chinese in this land, commended the diligence and success of the Convener in his work of tuition, requested him to undertake the further training of the class as far as his time and duties could permit, authorised, in order to the efficient management of the institution in future, the expenditure of a sum not exceeding £500 per annum, recommended all the congregations of the Church to manifest increased liberality on behalf of the funds, and enjoined ministers to bring the pressing claims of the heathen from time to time before their people.

It was resolved that the Rev. T. B. Swift, Rev. J. S. Chambers, and Rev. A. Stoker, who held the rank of ordained missionaries, should be recognised as ministers on the higher platform.

It was agreed that, inasmuch as Dr. Cairns had resigned his charge, and his resignation should take effect on 31st December, he be authorised to retain his right of membership in the Presbytery and Assembly.

The number of scholars in attendance at the Scotch College and the amount of revenue were greater than in any previous year. There were 362 in actual attendance at the end of the financial year, forty-four of whom were resident boarders. The revenue was £9,985

3s. 7d., and the 12½ per cent. payable to the Church amounted to £1,248 3s. The pupils had been preserved in excellent health.

The Ladies' College had made an encouraging commencement. The number of pupils in attendance the first quarter was sixty; the second quarter, one hundred and twenty; the third quarter, one hundred and sixty; and the fourth, in currency, one hundred and seventy.

In the Law Agent's report it appeared that the late Richard Brodie, Esq., had bequeathed to the Moderator for the time being of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria the legacy of £2,000, to be invested by him under the direction of the Supreme Court of the said Church, the income, arising from such sum, to be applied under similar direction to that for missionary purposes in the said Colony.

A very deep interest was taken by the former Assembly, and the present one also, in the establishment of a sustentation scheme. The final cessation of State-aid had become a fact. The five years' grace had closed. In so far as stipends of ministers were concerned, the want of State-help meant the average loss of £30 per annum. It was felt, therefore, to be exceedingly desirable to frame a scheme by which weak congregations might be assisted by the stronger, and might be enabled to reach the minimum stipend of £300 a year. The minds of members seemed in the discussion to oscillate very much between the Free Church of Scotland equal-dividend scheme and the United Presbyterian plan of simple aid-giving. The plan adopted in this Church was to have a staff of collectors for the fund in every congregation. It aimed not only at supporting weak causes, but also at making all the congregations of the Church feel that the support of the ministry is the duty of the Body as a whole.

There were not a few prejudices to overcome both in devising the scheme and in carrying it into effect.

The managers of congregations seemed to feel as if there was an interference with their freedom in handling finance, by their being called upon to look upon their Church revenue as belonging in a sense to the common funds of the entire denomination. However, the very effort to float the plan had an encouraging and a stimulating effect on all who endeavoured to give it a fair trial. It checked the downward tendency of weak congregations in regard to stipends, and reversed the incline. In the report of the previous year it was stated that seventeen congregations had added in the aggregate the sum of £431 11s. to the stipends of their ministers, or an average of £27. This with the £38 received by each from the general fund made an addition of £65.

During the past year the Committee received from the executors of the will of the late John Oliver, Esq., of Kerang, the handsome legacy of £500, which he bequeathed to the fund.

The Convener, Rev. D. S. M'Eachran, amid much to discourage, received such manifestations of liberality towards the fund as were well fitted to inspire him with firm resolution to go forward with the important work he had undertaken. He had obtained several contributions of £100. On asking Mr. J. C. M'Naughton for a donation he gave another £100 for the year. But when he was

asked whether he would be disposed to give a yearly contribution to the fund, he replied, after consideration, that he would give £100 per annum for five years, provided nine other separate contributions of the like sum could be got without affecting the congregational contributions. This would give the Committee £1,000, to start with, each year for five years. The whole list of ten contributors was soon completed. They are worthy of being recorded :—

Charles Wilson, Esq. (England)	£100	Messrs. Joseph M'Donald and John Matheson (St Kilda)	£100
James MacBain, Esq., M.L.A. (Toorak)	100	S. L. Currie, Esq. (St. Kilda)	100
J. C. M'Naughton, Esq. (London)	100	William Taylor, Esq. (Keilor)	100
Francis Ormond, jun., Esq. (Toorak)	100	Hon. William Wilson, Esq., M.L.C. (Toorak)	100
Hon. John Cumming, M.L.C. (Toorak)	100	James Hood, Esq. (Warrnambool)	100
		A Friend (The Leigh) ...	100

There were seventy-two congregations connected with the scheme —22 aid-giving, 35 aid-receiving, and 15 self-sustaining.

The sum available for distribution this year, obtained from congregations and from donations, besides interest, amounted to £1,534 13s. 2d.

The Pastoral Aid Society had been brought into operation. The object of this society was to economise means and ministerial labour in thinly-peopled towns and districts in the interior. The Presbyterian and Church of England ministers arranged to preach on alternate Sabbaths, in the same locality, and, it might be, to occupy the only place of worship that was available, to whichever section it belonged. The society was managed by an equal number of Church of England and Presbyterian gentlemen, who secured subscriptions as nearly as possible equal in amount from each denomination, and, with the funds at their disposal, supplemented the stipends of the ministers who were not fully supported by the local population. The amount distributed this year was £655, and the sum was divided among fifteen localities. Eleven of these received £50 each, one £30, and three £25.

The Home Mission Committee made an interesting report. During the year they had on their list twenty-seven preachers besides those who received occasional supply. Of these twenty-seven, ten became settled in charges, two left the colony, one was laid aside from duty, two were employed with the sanction of the Committee assisting ministers requiring help, and twelve remained in the service of the Church. The whole of these twelve were not available for service. On account of various hindrances and disabilities, only seven could be sent out on active work in the Church. There were also employed by the Committee five ordained missionaries. Adding these to the preachers on the list of probationers, and to the ministers in settled charges, the Church had one hundred and forty licensed ministers, statedly preaching the gospel within her bounds.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR.—1876.

January.—A unanimous call was brought out by the Presbyterians at Toorak in favour of Rev. Murdoch Macdonald. Mr. Macdonald, formerly of the Free Church congregation, Nairn, North of Scotland, had just recently arrived. The call was agreed upon, 28th December, and, having been presented to him by the Melbourne Presbytery, was cordially accepted. The induction was effected on 24th inst.

Rev. J. Ballantyne, Clerk of Presbytery, read a report from medical men relative to the state of his health, to the effect that he was suffering from long years of continuous labour, and that it was indispensable he should have twelve months of entire rest. His congregation concurred in his application to be so relieved. The application was granted with an expression of sympathy and earnest hope for his restoration.

Rev. W. G. Fraser was appointed to act in his place as Clerk of Presbytery.

Mr. Lithgow Tait, B.A., student, had completed two years of his theological course at the New Free Church College, Edinburgh, was placed under the supervision of the Melbourne Presbytery, and was admitted to an equivalent position in the Victorian Theological Hall.

February.—Rev. T. Neilson, missionary from the New Hebrides, addressed the Presbytery on the subject of the mission, and called attention to the proposal that the New Hebrides Mission should be taken up by the Presbyterian Churches of the Australian Colonies, and should be wholly managed and sustained by them.

The following were appointed Trustees of the Church property at Yarraville:—Messrs. John Campbell, Alexander Cumming, David Goudie, James Clark, and John Hood.

March.—A unanimous call issued from the Chalmers Church congregation, East Melbourne, in favour of Rev. James Beattie, late of Pitcairn Green, Free Church, Scotland. The call was accepted, and the induction carried into effect on 21st March.

The Presbyterians of Alexandra and Yea gave a call to Mr. W. M. Mackie, licentiate. The call was accepted, and after the usual trials, the induction took place on 5th May.

Rev. John Cameron had resigned his charge of the congregation at Seymour, and the people having expressed their concurrence with regret, the tie was dissolved.

Mr. Howe, student, was recommended for examination, with a view to his admission to the Theological Hall.

It was resolved, on the application of the Presbyterians of Dandenong, to constitute them a congregation in connection with this Church, and to disjoin Berwick congregation from that of Cranbourne, annexing it to Dandenong. Rev. A. Duff, M.A., generously agreed to the transfer.

April.—Mr. W. C. Johnston, student, who was officiating in Dorcas-street, Emerald Hill, in the room of Dr. Macdonald, absent in Scotland, had not decided to present himself at once to the Pres-

bytery on his trial for license, and he resigned his position in the Dorcas-street congregation.

The Principal of the Scotch College was congratulated by the Presbytery on his return from Scotland, and his having received the honour of LL.D. from the University of Aberdeen.

May.—The congregation at Dandenong and Berwick gave a call to Mr. W. L. Morton, licentiate. The invitation was accepted, and the ordination and induction were duly effected at Dandenong, on 5th July.

Rev. A. F. Knox, of Clarendon-street, Emerald Hill, received a call to Seymour, accepted the same, and was inducted into his new charge on 18th May.

June.—Rev. A. D. Kininmont, in consequence of protracted illness, was granted twelve months' leave of absence.

Rev. P. Mercer was obliged, in consequence of his engagements in the Theological Hall, to resign his preaching duties at Euroke.

July.—A movement was begun, towards establishing a new cause in Prahran and in East St. Kilda.

August.—It was resolved to commence service at East St. Kilda, at the request of Presbyterian residents in Windsor, East St. Kilda, and Balaclava.

The Presbyterians at Euroa gave a call to Rev. J. Weir, B.A., who accepted the same, and was inducted on 29th August.

The following Trustees of the Elsternwick Church property were appointed :—James Aitken and Joseph Hay, in room of Dr. M'Millan (deceased) and Rev. G. W. Adam (resigned).

Rev. Mr. Muir, of Donnybrook, received a call from Wickliffe, Presbytery of Mortlake. He accepted the invitation, and repaired to the other Presbytery for induction.

September.—The Trustees appointed for the Chapel-street (East St. Kilda) Church property, were, Sir James M'Culloch, John Thomas Clark, David Ross, Alexander M'Adam, and John Charles Lloyd.

The districts of Karimba, Shepparton, &c., were brought under the notice of the Presbytery, and also those of Mordialloc and Cape Schanck, with a view to a supply of ordinances.

Mr. Duncan M'Intosh was appointed Trustee of the Church property at Seymour, in room of John Rodger, deceased.

For Murchison Church property, the Trustees appointed were David Watt, James Winter, Charles Wemyss, George Wilson, and Thomas Holden.

October.—At the request of the Presbyterians worshipping at East St. Kilda, the Presbytery took steps to constitute them a regular congregation of the Church of Victoria. There were fifty-seven names of persons in full membership.

The North Carlton congregation had given a call to Rev. John Lyle, of the Presbytery of Christchurch, New Zealand. A communication was received from that Presbytery certifying to the release of Mr. Lyle from his charge, he having accepted the call from Victoria. The induction was carried into effect on 16th October

Rev. J. Bagley had resigned his charge of the congregation of Richmond, and was relieved.

A Mission Church had been begun in Simpson's-road, Melbourne, under the fostering care of Chalmers Church.

Mr. Weir, missionary, was recommended to submit himself to the Examination Board, in order that his standing in the Theological Hall might be determined.

Rev. A. D. Kininmont, in consequence of continued and severe indisposition, tendered the resignation of his charge at Hotham. The congregation agreed to grant him a retiring allowance of £130 a year, while the Presbytery expressed their deep sympathy, and recommended that he should receive from the Infirm Ministers' Fund £100 a year, and should retain his seat in the Presbytery and Assembly.

Rev. Dr. Cameron, St. Kilda, craved leave of absence for two or three months on account of his health. He had not been able to do full duty of late, and his medical adviser recommended entire cessation from work for a season. The Presbytery expressed their high esteem for Dr. Cameron, their deep sympathy in his affliction, and their earnest hope that he may be speedily restored.

December.—It was agreed to prepare a minute relative to Mr. Kininmont's resignation, seeing he had been a minister of considerable standing in the Colonial Church, held a prominent place in seeking the furtherance of his Master's cause, his amiable disposition, his unsparing devotedness in the service of the Church, besides the deep affliction he was called to bear by very painful bereavement in the family.

Rev. Mr. Morton had visited the district of Buln Buln, and had broken up new ground by preaching at Lardner, and service had continued to be held in the school-room by a Christian worker.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 2ND MAY, 1876.

REV. F. R. M. WILSON, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	C. Robinson, B.A.—Creswick and Dean.
,,	,,	A. Stoker—Inglewood and Bridgewater.
,,	,,	J. S. Chambers—Rochester, Runnymede, and Corop.
,,	,,	Murdoch Macdonald—Toorak.
,,	,,	D. S. Maxwell—Kew.
,,	,,	James Beattie—Chalmers Church, Melbourne.
,,	,,	T. B. Swift—Murchison and Dargalong.
Ordination	,,	W. M. Mackie—Yea and Alexandra.
,,	,,	John Dykes—Mortlake, Hexham, and Woorndoo.
Demission	,,	A. M'Nicol—Piggoreet and Staffordshire Reef.
,,	,,	W. B. Hutchison, M.A.—Clunes.
,,	,,	A. Chambers, B.A.—Newstead and Guildford.
,,	,,	A. W. Sinclair—Golden Square, Sandhurst.
,,	,,	D. Rattray—Pentland Hills and Parwan.
,,	,,	J. Cameron—Seymour and Mangalore.
,,	,,	R. Sutherland—Allansford, Wangoon, Framlingham, and Ellerslie.
,,	,,	J. M'Michael—Belfast and Rosebrook.
,,	,,	A. J. Allsworth—Penshurst and Caramut.
Death	,,	J. M'Roberts—Branxholme and Eumerella.

There were twenty-three items in the programme of business.

The Commission agreed to adopt a minute relative to the resignation of Rev. Dr. Cairns.*

In regard to the supply of outlying districts, it was resolved—

"That the fittest and most practical mode of supplying ordinances to outlying districts is by lay agents and preachers, or the employment of students during the recess between the Hall Sessions, and, that the consideration of the expediency of ordaining any of the agents so employed be left to the determination of the Assembly in connection with individual cases."

An encouraging resolution was adopted in connection with the Committee's report on the state of religion—

"They resolved to record their sincere gratification at hearing of the special evangelistic services which have been held during the past year, in different towns and districts throughout the Colony, as well as their heartfelt thanksgiving to the God of all grace for the favour and blessing He has been pleased to vouchsafe in connection with these movements. They commend to the consideration of ministers and sessions the propriety of affording to their congregations the privilege of participating in such special means of grace. They direct also that Presbyteries consider the expediency of holding meetings for prayer and conference in different places from time to time throughout their bounds, to which the members and adherents of the Church should be invited."

* "The Commission have heard with much regret that, in consequence of advancing years and failing health, the Rev. Dr. Cairns has been led to resign his charge of the Chalmers Church congregation. The Commission gratefully remember the numerous and valuable services which, for the long period of three and twenty years, he has rendered to the Presbyterian Church in Victoria. He came to the Colony at a crisis in the history of this Church, and immediately exerted himself to promote her peace and prosperity. His high character, his great ability, and his great experience as a Christian minister were of signal advantage to her in her early days. His devotion to her interests was unceasing, and by the Divine blessing, his labours on her behalf were followed with remarkable success. He took an active and a prominent part in the Union of the various sections of the Church which has proved so great a blessing to the country. The union having been happily accomplished, he exerted himself to organise congregations in all parts of the Colony, and to promote their welfare. The Commission desire especially to express their obligations to Dr. Cairns for his valuable services in connection with the establishment of the Theological Hall. He earnestly sought to provide for this his adopted country an efficient body of ministers trained and educated within the Colony, and the fruit of his labours in this department of Christian work is now apparent in the progress and prosperity of this institution. His labours in the cause of Sabbath observance have been specially faithful and unremitting. He frequently exerted himself to protect the Sabbath when as a Divine institution it was assailed, and in this, as well as in all his other service which he has rendered to the Church, and to the country at large, the Commission acknowledge that he has proved himself a true patriot, a lover of men, in the highest sense of the term. They rejoice to know that, although he has resigned his pastoral charge, he does not withdraw from all connection with the work of the Church, but that he retains his seat as an '*emeritus* minister' in her Courts, and their fervent and united prayer is, that he may yet long continue among them, to encourage them with his presence, and to aid them with his counsels in the work so dear to his heart, and in which, as they know, his interest is unabated."

It had been unanimously agreed to nominate Rev. Archibald Simpson as Moderator of next Assembly.

It was proposed to use means to ascertain whether the congregations of the Church would support a monthly *Missionary Record* at the price of one penny.

Authentic information had arrived relative to the postponement of the General Council in Edinburgh till 1867, but Dr. Macdonald had gone before the news of the change came to hand.

It was agreed that Rev. J. Ballantyne and Mr. Andrew Scott be commissioned to attend the annual meetings of the Home Churches, appointed to meet in Edinburgh in May and June.

A small outstanding remnant of Presbyterian ministers, designated the Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, informed the Commission that they had appointed a Committee to confer with any Committee which might be appointed by the Commission of Assembly as to the practicability of Union.

It was resolved that the Commission, while declining to consider this application, declares its readiness to receive applications for admission from individual ministers or congregations, and to decide each case on its merits.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 14TH NOVEMBER, 1876.

REV. A. SIMPSON, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	John Lyle—North Carlton.
,,	,,	J. Weir, B.A.—Longwood, Euroa, and Duck Ponds.
,,	,,	F. Souter—Deniliquin and Ulupna.
,,	,,	T. Edwards—Chiltern.
,,	,,	A. M'Nicol—Bright and Buckland.
Translation	,,	J. S. Muir—Wickliffe, Glen Thompson, Chatsworth, and Lake Bolac.
,,	,,	A. F. Knox—Seymour and Mangalore.
,,	,,	D. S. Brunton—Blackwood and Pentland Hills.
Ordination	,,	W. L. Morton—Dandenong and Berwick.
,,	,,	W. Thomson—Mooroopna.
,,	,,	J. Russell—Newstead and Guildford.
,,	,,	C. Thomson, M.A.—Branxholme and Eumerella.
Demission	,,	A. D. Kininmont—Union Church, Hotham.
,,	,,	John Bagley—Richmond.
,,	,,	J. B. Reid—Eaglehawk.
,,	,,	M. Dixon—Scarsdale and Smythesdale.
,,	,,	R. Kennedy—The Richardson.
Death	,,	W. C. Chapman—Portland.

There were one hundred and twenty-two ministers occupying settled charges, while there were one hundred and forty-three congregations.

Fifty-two items of business were on the programme.

It appeared from the Home Mission report that during the past year six students had finished their course at the Theological Hall, four of whom had been licensed, and two were engaged in evangelistic or Home Mission work. Five ministers who had resigned their charges were on the list for pulpit supply and probation.

The following seven ministers had been admitted into the

Church:—Rev. Messrs. M. Macdonald, J. Russell, J. Beattie, C. Bell, Free Church of Scotland; J. Lawrie, New Zealand; J. R. Wardrop, New South Wales; and W. Bonthron, Established Church of Scotland.

There had been twenty-one settlements of ministers, and there were twenty vacancies.

Besides the wants of Victoria, a large territory, north of the Murray, called Riverina, accessible to Presbyterian agencies from Victoria, was in urgent need of ministerial workers. This vast district belonging to New South Wales, was occupied chiefly by squatters who were Presbyterians, and who had intimate relations with Victoria. Only one minister had been inducted into a charge at Deniliquin. But the immense tract of country, extending hundreds and thousands of square miles in all directions had no man ministerially to care for the souls of the Presbyterian residents.

The Assembly recommended, on the subject of religious instruction, that the ministers of this Church be strongly recommended to take advantage, as far as possible, both of existing facilities and of such as may in future be afforded for giving religious instruction in the State-schools.

On the subject of Missions to Aborigines and Chinese, it was elicited that there were fifty-three baptised members of the native Church at Ramahyuck (the spelling now commonly adopted). A child of tender years and a young man had died. The latter had been impressed under the preaching of the gospel, and was baptised. He died in peace and hope, rejoicing in Jesus.

In the examination of the school for results, the inspector again placed the aboriginal school in Gippsland highest in the list of all State-schools in Victoria.

The Chinese Seminary was opened on 12th May, 1875. The class met in a rented house in Fitzroy, where the members resided. The Convener met them two hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The exercises embraced expositions, essays, and scripture proofs. The whole of the Gospels of Mark and John, and one-half of the Acts, had been studied. The Books of Genesis and Exodus were read carefully by the class privately for Bible history, and they were examined at length on what they had read. They had also studied Joshua, Judges, and part of I. and II. Samuel. They wrote several essays on scripture subjects. Upwards of fifty points in the Saviour's genealogy, history, offices, names, and character were considered. They took full notes of all the expositions and scripture proofs brought before them. They wrote first in Chinese stenography, and afterwards extended their notes in full, and carefully kept them for future use. One of them of his own accord drew two maps of Palestine, one for the Old Testament, the other for the New. An attempt was kindly made by one of the theological students to instruct the class in the English tongue. His efforts were earnest and devoted, but the difficulties were great.

The Chinese class were still under training at the seminary. From November to March they were released from study, and had

districts apportioned to them for missionary work. Two laboured in Melbourne, two in Ballaarat, one in Ballan and Egerton, and one was laid aside by illness.

The Assembly rejoiced in the evidence that the divine blessing had been resting on the Aboriginal Mission, and that the work of the Chinese Seminary had been carried on with so much success.

After consideration of the question of admission into the Church, it was resolved that Rev. W. A. Baker should be received, and that Rev. J. Brown and Mr. J. H. Harvey be employed as missionaries.

The report respecting the Sustentation Scheme was still cheering. Its design was gradually to secure that all ministers in regular charges should receive a minimum stipend of £300 per annum. No congregation, however, was to be a burden on the fund to a greater extent than £50. The fund this year would admit of the maximum aid being given to all the congregations entitled to the distinction. The benefits accruing from the sustentation efforts to the Church indirectly were very marked. In 1870 it was reported to the Assembly that, out of one hundred and fifteen ministers in the Church, there were forty-seven who received less than £300. This year, out of one hundred and twenty-one ministers, there would be only twenty-three who should receive less than £300. In 1870, there were thirty-two who received less than £250 a year; this year only seven will be in that low scale. In 1870 fourteen ministers received less than £200; this year only three will receive less than that sum.

The scheme had even tended to the extension of the Church. The formation of new congregations in destitute districts had been stimulated. In some districts people had exerted themselves to raise for stipend £200 or £250, in order that they might receive the benefit of the fund. In other places the resolution had been formed to do their utmost to raise the minimum stipend, and not be in any degree a burden to the fund.

The donations had been larger than in any previous year. A number of warm and devoted members of the Church, by their liberality, had to a great extent the credit of the prosperous condition of the fund. In addition to those ten gentlemen who gave their £100 before, there were others who had followed the same example. These were :—

Wm. M'Naughton Love, Esq.	£100	Rev. D. S. M'Eachran and Rev. A. M'Vean	£100
Alex. Armstrong, Esq. ...	100	J. C. M'Naughton, Esq. ...	100
Charles Wilson, Esq.	100	Hon. Wm. Wilson, M.L.C. (conditionally)	100
James M'Bain, Esq.	100		
Godfrey M'Millan, Esq. ...	100		
Messrs. T. and A. Scott ...	100		

These £900 were all promised for the current year, so, with the £100 of Mr. Oliver's legacy, the year began with subscriptions promised to the extent of £1,000. Even for the following year, ending 30th September, 1878, £700 in promises could be calculated on for fulfilment.

The Committee were authorised to send deputations to the different congregations of the Church for the purpose of stirring up their interest in the fund, and Presbyteries were enjoined to inquire, in March, whether the congregations were carrying out the regulation which requires that the free-will offerings of the people to this fund be taken up by collectors at stated times.

Special thanks were given by the Assembly to Rev. D. S. M'Eachran for his great diligence and his important services in connection with the Sustentation Fund.

In the spirit of true Christian liberality, a Committee on Co-operation with other Churches had been appointed. In accordance with the object of their appointment, Rev. E. Greenwood, Chairman of the Congregational Union, and Rev. S. C. Kent, were introduced as representatives of the Body. These brethren were cordially welcomed, and they addressed the Assembly, conveying their congratulations.

The Assembly agreed to thank the deputation, and to record their heartiest wishes for the successful progress of the great work of our common Master in connection with the Congregational Union.

The fraternal spirit went so far at this time that a proposal was entertained in reference to the amalgamation of the Theological Halls of the two denominations.

The Widows and Orphans' Fund Committee presented an interesting report. In consequence of the death of two ministers, one leaving a widow and nine children, another leaving a widow and eight orphans, there were nineteen additional annuitants who required to be provided for. But there were three orphans who had reached the age at which annuities were no longer paid. With the changes that had occurred since the previous year it came to pass that there were twenty-two widows and thirty-nine children, of whom eleven were orphans, who were dependent on the fund. The annuities ranged in amount from £33 to £160. The revenue, with rates, collections, and interest, amounted to £1,736 0s. 6d. The annuities and Assembly's expenses of two and a half per cent. made payments equal to £1,147 7s. 7d. The capital of the fund on 30th September, which was increased last year by £588 12s. 11d., amounted to £18,203 16s. 6d. The capital had increased in the preceding five years by £4,123 4s. 9d. The Assembly warmly recommended the fund to the Christian sympathy and liberality of the people.

A desire was expressed that the Assembly should instruct all ministers and probationers of the Church to offer thanksgiving to Almighty God especially in their congregations for the abundant rain with which He had so mercifully visited this land.

The Infirm Ministers' Fund received a gratifying impetus during the past year through the exertions of a Ladies' Committee connected with the Church. It was proposed that they should raise the capital to £12,000. Through their efforts, £1,260 had been added to the capital. This amounted to £8,209 11s. 1d., making an increase for the year of £1,612 12s. 2d. Three annuitants had been

admitted to the benefits of the fund. The Assembly expressed warm thanks to the Ladies' Committee, and especially to the secretary, Mrs. Robert Harper, for their valuable efforts on behalf of the fund.

It was now recognised as a fixed rule for permanent beneficiaries, on condition of their having paid £5 each year for five years after ordination or induction, that they should receive £50 per annum, and then £2 additional for every year above five they have served in ministerial charges.

The Assembly agreed on the formation of a new Presbytery, to be designated the Presbytery of Seymour. The congregations belonging to the new Presbytery would be St. Andrew's and St. George's, Kilmore; Murchison and Dargalong; Seymour and Mangalore; Longwood, Euroa, and Duck Ponds; Yea and Alexandra; Nagambie; Heathcote, Mooroopna, Toolamba, and Girgarre; Rushworth and Whroo; also Mansfield; embracing nine ministers and twenty congregations.

The Presbytery of Mortlake obtained leave to take Mr. D. A. Souter on trial for license, and the Presbytery of Gippsland to take Mr. G. H. Robertson on trial for the same end.

The Presbytery of Hamilton had deposed a minister from office.

The Trustees of the Brunswick Church were authorised to sell the half acre on which the school buildings are erected, and apply the proceeds to the purchase of land adjoining the Church site on the Sydney-road, in order to extend the accommodation, and provide suitable Sabbath-school buildings.

Authority was given to the Trustees of the Colac Church to sell their present Church site, and to apply the proceeds to the purchase of another more eligible.

The Trustees of the Elsternwick Church were empowered to mortgage their Church property, and to apply the amount to the erection of their new Building.

The Trustees of the Church property at Steiglitz obtained leave to sell the existing building, the proceeds of sale, together with contributions and rents in their hands, to be paid to the General Treasurer of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, to be retained by him at interest on account of the Steiglitz congregation for a period of ten years, and, if not required for the Steiglitz congregation at the end of that time, the money to be paid into the reserve fund for Church sites.

Permission was given to the Trustees of the Church property at Clare Inn to sell the school property, and apply the proceeds to the improvement of the new Church.

Leave was granted to the Trustees of the Parwan Church to sell the Church property, and to apply the proceeds, if any, after repaying the amount due to the loan fund, to repairing the manse at Bacchus Marsh.

An application from the Trustees of the property of the Scots Church, Melbourne, was approved, to sell, mortgage, or lease their school property, and to apply the proceeds to the erection of

Mission and Children's Church, Sabbath-school class-rooms, &c., and for the payment of the stipend of an assistant minister, in connection with that and the other work of the congregation.

Events of the Year.—1877.

January.—At the opening of the business of the Melbourne Presbytery, attention was called to the decease of Mr. M'Caw.*

The Clarendon-street congregation, Emerald Hill, had agreed on a call to Rev. Charles Bell, who had recently arrived from the Free Church, Scotland. It was signed by eighty-two members and twenty-three adherents. Mr. Bell accepted, and was inducted on 16th January.

The affairs of the Richmond congregation had become complicated, and caused some trouble. The result was the discovery that the general fund of the congregation was owing to the manse fund the sum of £1,164 1s. 5d. This was the balance of the proceeds of land sold, and granted to the congregation for the purpose of building a manse. The congregation were recommended to proceed to the erection as soon as possible.

Rev. D. S. Maxwell, of Kew, had tendered the resignation of his pastoral charge. The congregation expressed their deepest sorrow, having enjoyed his able and faithful ministrations, but, finding that it was his fixed resolution to return to Scotland, they reluctantly acquiesced. He was accordingly relieved. The Presbytery recorded their sense of the great loss sustained by the Church through his removal.

February.—The Presbytery of Melbourne congratulated Dr. M'Donald on his safe return after twelve months' absence. They also expressed thankfulness that Dr. Cameron had returned from New Zealand improved in health after three months' rest. They further agreed to express their sense of the loss sustained by the great cause of evangelistic religion in this Colony by the sudden death of Rev. James Martin, in Tasmania, minister of the Baptist Church, Collins-street.

Mr. James Brett was appointed Trustee of Whittlesea Church property, in room of Mr. John Wishart, deceased.

The following Trustees were appointed for the Church property at Sandridge :—Alexander Ebbing Aitken, John M'Pherson, William Morley, instead of Andrew Ross, James M'Kelvie, and William Cruikshank.

March.—Rev. J. Ballantyne was congratulated on his return from the Home Country in renewed health and vigour.

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* Memorial Notice.

Mr. M'Caw had been long identified with the oldest Presbyterian congregation of the city of Melbourne, was esteemed as a large-hearted and liberal man towards ecclesiastical and philanthropic objects. The Presbytery unanimously agreed to record their sense of the loss which the Church had sustained by his demise.

The Presbytery agreed to express and record their deep sympathy with Rev. R. Hamilton, Fitzroy, on the occasion of the sudden decease of his beloved wife in Tasmania.

Rev. W. M. Mackie, of Yea and Alexandra, had received a call from the congregation of Wallan Wallan, which he accepted through the Presbytery of Seymour; and he was inducted on 27th March.

Leave of absence for two months was granted to Rev. R. Hamilton, on account of severe prostration through recent illness. A medical certificate testified to his need of rest. Rev. George Tait was appointed Moderator of Session *pro tem.*

Rev. W. L. Morton had visited Buln Buln and Lardner's Creek, and had preached to congregations numbering between forty and fifty people at each place. A general desire was expressed to have ordinances supplied by the Presbytery.

April.—Rev. J. Lawrie was granted a certificate of full standing as a preacher of this Church, with a view to his labouring in another Colony.

Mr. J. M. Macdonald, B.A., and Mr. Weir, missionary, desired admission to the Theological Hall, and were referred to the Examination Board. A similar application was made by Messrs. W. Scott and John Spalding, and agreed to. Mr. Thos. L. Ritchie applied for admission as a student of the fourth year, because he had attended three sessions at the Free Church Theological Hall, Edinburgh. The application was sustained.

Mr. Francis Elliot, who had recently arrived, wished to be received as a missionary with a view to his engagement in evangelistic work, and also his being trained for the ministry. He was transferred to the Board of Examiners.

June.—The Union Church, Hotham, had brought out a call in favour of Rev. Dr. Gilchrist, of the Scots Church, Sydney, New South Wales. The call was accepted through the Sydney Presbytery, and the induction was effected on 19th inst.

Information was given to the Presbytery that Mr. Thomas Scott, with the aid of a few friends, had provided a salary for a missionary to labour in connection with the charitable institutions of the city, especially with a view to the spiritual wants of the Presbyterian inmates, and that Rev. James Brown had been engaged.

Rev. J. Ballantyne tendered the resignation of his charge of the Erskine Church congregation. A Committee of Presbytery had conferred with the people, and arrangements were made relating to his retirement. The idea of a colleague was entertained and fallen from, but he had no idea of severing his connection with the Church, the Presbytery, or his office as Clerk. The Presbytery afterwards adopted a minute expressive of sympathy with Mr. Ballantyne. He had been known for many years as one of the leading ministers of the Church. He aided largely in the negotiations which issued in the general Union of 1859, and had always been ready to take his full share of Church work. He had been well-known outside the Church, especially in the promotion of

temperance, and in the cultivation and spread of religious literature. The resignation would not take effect till November next.

July.—A minute had been forwarded according to the instructions of the Presbytery to Rev. Dr. Somerville, of the Free Church, Glasgow, Scotland, who had come to Victoria on a general evangelistic tour, expressive of sympathy with his important mission.

August—A call had issued from the congregation at Kew in favour of Rev. F. R. M. Wilson, of Camperdown. It was accepted through the Mortlake Presbytery, and the induction took effect on 21st inst.

A call had been brought out at Bairnsdale, Gippsland, on behalf of Rev. W. F. Main, of Collingwood. Mr. Main accepted, and was commended to the Gippsland Presbytery for the arrangements regarding his induction.

It was agreed to make inquiry into the spiritual necessities of Hastings and Phillip Island, as well as Dromana and the adjacent district.

Rev. J. Griffith had applied for admission into the Church as a missionary. His examination by the Board was highly satisfactory, and it was agreed that his application should be sustained, subject to the sanction of the General Assembly.

September.—A movement was begun with a view to obtaining a Professor for the Theological Hall from Home. It was agreed to recommend to the Assembly the propriety of appointing an influential Commission in Scotland to assist the Church here in securing the services of a competent Professor for the chair.

Rev. John Stevens Miller, who had been conducting a boys' seminary at Toorak, in the prospect of his returning to Scotland, asked and obtained from the Presbytery a certificate recognising his standard and labours in the service of the Church.

October.—The following Trustees of the Church property in Collingwood were appointed:—William Bertram, James M'Alpin Tait, Robert Penman, Robert Sturrock, and John Gladstone.

It was reported that Mr. F. Elliott, student, had been doing mission work in the district of Buln Buln, but was leaving on account of his health.

Rev. A. M'Vean was associated with Rev. W. L. Morton in looking after the district.

Attention was called to the sudden and unexpected decease of Rev. Alexander Brims, of South Yarra.*

A call from the East St. Kilda congregation had issued on behalf of Rev. R. S. Duff, M.A., of Evandale, Tasmania. But after full deliberation, the call was declined.

Rev. W. G. Fraser requested the Presbytery to be allowed to withdraw his services from Keilor congregation.

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* Memorial Notice.

After a brief illness he was cut off in the prime of his days. He was held in high estimation as a man and as a minister of the gospel. Much sympathy was felt for the congregation, and for the widow and fatherless children.

It appeared that the following gentlemen—Messrs. Robert Swan, John F. Kennedy, John Watson, and James Watson—had resigned their Trusteeship of the Church property of Clarendon-street, Emerald Hill, and Messrs. James Gibson, James Walker, and Edmond F. M'Allister were duly elected and appointed in their stead.

December.—The solemn announcement was made of the removal by death of Rev. Hugh Darling. A Committee was appointed to prepare a minute for the permanent record.*

It was arranged that Rev. D. S. M'Eachran should evangelise in the Mornington Peninsula for a period of three months, in order to awaken an interest in divine things through a large district.

Messrs. John Mackie and Lithgow Tait, B.A., were licensed to preach the gospel on 4th inst., and they were referred to the Home Mission Committee for employment as probationers.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 1st May, 1887.

Rev. A. Simpson, Moderator.

Induction	— Rev.	John Bradley—Portland.
,,	,,	C. Bell—Clarendon-street, Emerald Hill.
Ordination	,,	H. Swan—Donald.
Translation	,,	R. Lewers—Eaglehawk.
,,	,,	W. M. Mackie—Donnybrook and Wallan Wallan.
Demission	,,	Rev. H. B. Giles—Albury.
,,	,,	W. F. Fraser M.A.—Huntly, Axedale, and Goornong.
,,	,,	W. C. Wallace, M.A.—Moorabool.
,,	,,	R. B. Scott—Carlsruhe.
,,	,,	W. Munro—Woodend and Newham.
,,	,,	D. S. Maxwell—Kew.

There were fifteen items of business in the programme.

It was agreed to nominate Rev. R. Hamilton, Fitzroy, Moderator for next Assembly.

In reference to a Theological Professor, it was agreed "that it be remitted to Presbyteries to declare whether they thought the time had come to appoint a permanent Theological Professor, and in the event of their approving of such, to nominate a Professor, according to the regulations adopted by the Assembly of 1869, or otherwise to indicate in what manner they think the proposal should be carried into effect, it being understood that no action shall be taken by the

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* Memorial Minute.

The Presbytery resolved to record their respect for his memory, and their sympathy with his family. It is now seventeen years since Mr. Darling came to the Colony. He was inducted as a minister of Clarendon-street Church, Emerald Hill, on 29th April, 1861. He laboured there with much acceptance and success until March, 1874, when, being struck with paralysis, he was compelled to resign his charge. As a mark of honour due to his diligent and faithful ministry, on the recommendation of the Presbytery the General Assembly directed his name to be retained as a member *emeritus* of the General Assembly and of the Presbytery of Melbourne. He was not able, however, to attend these Courts. His health became gradually feebler until he sank to rest on 2nd December, 1877.

Assembly, in the way of electing a Professor, unless a majority of the Presbyteries shall have recommended that such election be forthwith effected."

It was resolved that Mr. J. H. Harvey, on application from the Wimmera Presbytery, be admitted as a student to the Theological Hall.

On the subject of friendly co-operation with other Churches, it was resolved that the Moderator, Rev. Dr. Cairns, Rev. D. S. M'Eachran, Rev. T. M. Fraser, and Mr. J. Balfour be appointed to attend the next meeting of the Assembly of the Melbourne diocese of the Church of England as representatives of this Church, and convey to them our fraternal regards and our desire for closer co-operation between the two Churches.

The Trustees at Horsham were authorised to mortgage their Church property to the extent of £1,000.

The Trustees of East St. Kilda were permitted to mortgage their Church property to the extent of £2,000.

In connection with the report on the State of Religion, the Commission expressed their sincere gratification at the action which had been taken in reference to evangelistic and revival work during the past year, especially by the Presbytery of Ballaarat, and of the fruit resulting from the efforts put forth. They had heard with interest the accounts which the report contained of the movements at Geelong and other places. They recorded their special thanks to Mr. Andrew Scott for the large and seasonable supplies of religious literature which he had transmitted from England for distribution in the Colony.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 12th November, 1877.

Rev. R. Hamilton, Fitzroy, Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	W. B. Hutchison, M.A.—Smythesdale and Scarsdale.
,,	,,	E. Gray, B.A.—Clunes.
,,	,,	M. Dixon—Wangaratta.
,,	,,	Dr. Gilchrist—Union Church, Hotham.
,,	,,	A. Chambers, B.A.—Penshurst.
Translation	,,	G. Mather—Swan Hill.
,,	,,	W. F. Main—Bairnsdale.
,,	,,	F. R. M. Wilson—Kew.
Ordination	,,	A. D. Souter—Allansford and districts conjoined.
Demission	,,	J. E. Armour—Miners' Rest and Coghill's Creek.
,,	,,	E. Gray, B.A.—Dimboola.
,,	,,	A. F. Knox—Seymour and Mangalore.
Death	,,	W. Thom, M.A.—Ballan.
,,	,,	A. Brims, M.A., B.D.—South Yarra.

There were forty-nine points of business in the programme.

In connection with the Treasurer's report, the cordial thanks of the Assembly were given to Rev. P. S. Mercer for his care and diligence in fulfilling the duties of his office.

In regard to the Widows and Orphans' Fund, the Assembly expressed thanks to God for the measure of prosperity which had hitherto attended the fund, and sought to direct the attention of

the more liberal and Christian-hearted of the members of the Church to the urgent need which existed for increasing the capital of the fund, praying God to foster more and more in this Church a practical sympathy for the widow and the orphan. The capital amounted to £19,067 3s. 1d.

In reference to the Infirm Ministers' Fund, the Assembly expressed regret that the fund should be so slowly reaching the desired capital of £12,000, invited contributions and legacies to this most deserving cause from the members and adherents of the Church, and enjoined ministers to keep the interests of the fund prominently before their congregations. This year the capital amounted to £8,569 8s. 5d.

The Rev. J. Ballantyne, in consideration of his past services to the Church, although detached from his charge at Erskine Church, was authorised to retain his seat in the Presbytery.

The deliverance of the Assembly on the question of a Theological Professor's appointment was important. It was resolved—

"That the Assembly nominate Rev. Dr. Goold, of Edinburgh, as the first permanent Professor in connection with our Theological Hall; that the following gentlemen—viz., Professors Flint, Rainy, Cairns, and Porter—be appointed Commissioners to present the nomination to Dr. Goold, and deal with him in the matter; that they be respectfully requested to use their influence to induce his acceptance of the call; and that in the event of Dr. Goold declining to accept the appointment, the gentlemen named be requested to act as a Commission to elect a permanent Professor for this Church. Professor Cairns, Edinburgh, to be Convener of the Commission."

In connection with this subject, it was resolved to appoint a large Committee (the Moderator, Convener) to prepare a communication, to be sent to the Commission chosen for the election of a Theological Professor.

The Assembly agreed to record their gratitude to Almighty God for the late seasonable and abundant rain, and instructed ministers in their various congregations to offer special thanksgivings for the providential mercy.

From the report on the Scotch College, it appeared that, since Dr. Morrison's appointment, new buildings had been erected at a cost of £16,410; that the cost had been defrayed, not by subscriptions, but by a percentage of 12½ on the gross revenue; that the present debt amounted to £8,000; and that the percentage had been sufficient, not only to pay for all repairs, interest, insurance, and many incidental expenses, but also, for some years, to reduce the principal debt at the rate of £500 per annum.

In relation to the Ladies' College, the Assembly accorded their congratulations to the Rev. G. Tait, M.A., on the marked success which had attended the institution since his appointment. The average attendance had been maintained. The revenue showed an increase of £89 13s. 3d. The total liability of the College was £13,400. Religious instruction was given by the Principal in all the classes. A Sabbath afternoon class was held for the boarders.

A report was submitted by the Committee on the site for an affiliated College at the Melbourne University in connection with the Presbyterian Church. A communication had been received from the Government Commissioner of Education for the purpose of ascertaining whether the Church were disposed to take any immediate steps for the erection of the proposed College on the reserve adjoining the University grounds. The University was exclusively a secular institution. But when the Act of Incorporation and Endowment of the University was passed in 1853, provision was made for the establishment of affiliated Colleges, where students belonging to the various denominations, whether intended for the Church or otherwise, should reside under Christian discipline, receive religious instruction, and be trained for the Christian ministry. For these objects the Government reserved sites for affiliated Colleges which should belong to the four denominations—Church of England, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, and Roman Catholic. The reservation for the Presbyterian body embraced ten acres of most valuable land, supposed to be equal in value to £30,000. These sites were only reserves till the religious Bodies should enter on occupation, fencing and building, and turning them to their intended use. Till this was done the Crown grant could not issue, and the Government might resume possession. The only conditions imposed by the Council of the University on affiliated Colleges were two :—1. That the Council approve of the designs of the building to be erected as being suitable in their external architectural character. 2. That any student at an affiliated College should, matriculate at the University within six months after he has entered into residence.

The objects to be sought by this Church in utilising the site for an affiliated College are these :—1. As a college of residence for students attending the classes of the University. 2. As a theological hall for the training of ministers. The Presbyterian Church had done nothing with the site, and the question pressing on them was whether to occupy the reserve or to allow the Government to resume possession. Another alternative, indeed, was to sell the land, half the proceeds to go to the State and half to the Church.

The Committee had seriously deliberated on the situation, and strongly deprecated the idea of parting with the land. And in order to make a start in the way of occupation, it was proposed that no time should be lost in raising subscriptions, drawing up a constitution for the College, procuring plans, getting the Crown grant, and proceeding with the erection of the College. It was resolved that an effort should be made among our wealthy laymen to get one hundred gentlemen who should subscribe sums of not less, on the average, than £100. It was considered indispensable to the success of the undertaking that the College should be used for the theological hall. Hereby one of the most pressing wants of the Church would be supplied.

In order to secure these objects the Assembly declared at once in favour of the College ; also, of an effort to raise £10,000 ; and

further, of the College being used—(*a*) As a college of residence for students attending the University; and (*b*) as a theological hall for training candidates for the ministry.

The following were appointed Trustees of the affiliated College :— Messrs. J. MacBain, Francis Ormond, A. Scott, William Kerr Thomson, Robert Jonathan Jeffray, A. Morrison, John L. Currie, and John Cumming.

It was also agreed that the College be placed under the management of a Council of twenty-four gentlemen, responsible to the General Assembly, to be composed as follows :—1. Eight Trustees; 2. Eight members appointed by the General Assembly; 3. Eight members appointed by the subscribers, so long as there shall be twenty subscribers of at least ten guineas each; 4. Four of each class of the elective members of Committee to retire annually by rotation, but to be eligible for re-election.

The Presbytery of Beechworth reported that they had obtained peaceful possession of the Church and manse at Beechworth. The Presbytery were instructed to take whatever steps might be found necessary, under the direction of the Law Committee, for recovering possession likewise of the Church property at Stanley.

The Committee on religious instruction of the young reported that they believed there never had been more activity in Sabbath-school labour in any period of the history of the Church. A great and good work was being carried on in every congregation of the Church through the agency of ministers, elders, and Sabbath-school teachers, by sermons to the young, by special services of song, and by the circulation of juvenile Christian literature. In order to supply the want of religious instruction in State-schools, the Protestant ministers of various localities had organised morning classes in their respective Churches two or three days in the week. The Assembly recommended that a Committee be appointed in each Presbytery, whose special duty it should be to use all endeavours to promote religious instruction among the young on week as well as Sabbath-days.

According to the report of the Home Mission Committee, there had been at the beginning of the year no fewer than twenty vacancies extending over all the Presbyteries of the Church, for which they required to find supply. Fifteen of these vacant charges had ministers settled among them throughout the year, including Allansford, which had been revived. And they entered on another year with twenty-nine vacancies requiring to be supplied. Besides these there were a number of mission stations which were supplied with the help of the "Richard Brodie Bequest Fund." These were Buln Buln, Heytesbury Forest, Kohl's Ranges, and North Wimmera. Since last Assembly the following ordained ministers had been received into the Church in full standing :—

Rev. W. A. Baker, admitted by last Assembly.
Rev. T. Blain, from Presbyterian Church, Queensland.
Rev. A. Chambers, B.A., returned from America.
Rev. J. Henry, from United Presbyterian Church, Scotland.

Rev. W. Hogg, from Presbyterian Church, New South Wales.
Rev. A. M. Jarvie, from the United Presbyterian Church, Scotland—went to New South Wales.
Rev. J. Kirkwood, received on the recommendation of the Presbytery of Castlemaine.
Rev. W. C. M'Donald, M.A., from the Church of Scotland.
Rev. J. B. Reid, returned from Europe.
Rev. J. G. Wilson, admitted by last Assembly.
Rev. S. Robinson, from the Presbyterian Church of North America, formerly from Ireland.
J. Urquhart, from the Free Church of Scotland.
Mr. D. A. Souter, student, who was licensed.

The Committee regretted how little they had done for the pastoral district of Riverina. It was in contemplation to send deputies over part of the territory of the Lower Murray, and to station ministers at Wentworth and Menindie, and other centres, as soon as possible. They declared their conviction that this Church was doing a great work in this new land, and that it was mainly its success which was embarrassing. One thing was encouraging. All the Home Presbyterian Churches were most cordial in their willingness to support the Presbyterian Churches in these Colonies, and particularly the Church of Victoria, which was larger in numbers and influence than the others.

The Assembly welcomed the brethren who had joined the ministry of the Church during the year—felt encouraged by the sympathy and aid of the parent Churches—suggested for consideration whether students for the ministry at Home might be invited to come and complete their studies at the Theological Hall of this Colony,—and renewed the expression of their anxiety for those of the congregations, families, and adherents of the Presbyterian Body who were without the stated means of grace.

A commission was read and sustained in favour of Rev. David Sidey, of Napier, as a deputy from the General Assembly of New Zealand. He was invited to sit as an associated member, and was welcomed by the Moderator in the name of the Assembly. At a subsequent meeting, Rev. Mr. Sidey addressed the Assembly, after which it was resolved—"That the Moderator convey to Mr. Sidey the thanks of the Assembly for his interesting and instructive address; that he be asked to assure the General Assembly of New Zealand of our lively interest in their progress; that this Assembly record their hope that the day is not far distant when a confederate Assembly of the various Presbyterian Churches in our Southern Hemisphere may be convened, to consider and adjudicate upon matters affecting their general advancement and welfare." Mr. Sidey was addressed in suitable terms by the Moderator.

A draft letter of sympathy to Rev. Dr. Cameron in his severe prostration was submitted by the Moderator, as appointed by the Assembly, and approved. It was agreed that the letter should be presented personally by the Moderator in the name of the Assembly.

A resolution was adopted to give special thanks to Rev. D. S. M'Eachran and Rev. R. Hamilton, on their being constrained,

through impaired health, to resign the Convenorships of the Sustentation Fund Committee and the Committee on Missions to the Chinese and Aborigines respectively. The resolution was carried into effect.

As to the changes proposed to be effected by sales and mortgages of Church property, it was agreed—

"That the congregation of Horsham obtain liberty to mortgage their property for £1,000 to pay off a debt resting on the property."

The congregation at Kerang got power to sell an acre of their site for £200, the proceeds to be applied to the purchase of a paddock for the use of the minister, and towards the building of a new Church.

The congregation at Echuca were authorised to sell a portion of their land, with the buildings standing upon it, the proceeds to be applied to the purchase of a new site and the erection of another Church.

The congregation at Bairnsdale got authority to mortgage their Church land, the proceeds to be applied to the erection of a new Church and manse.

The congregation at North Carlton obtained leave to mortgage their Church and site, the proceeds to be applied to the erection of a new Church.

The congregation at Collingwood got permission to sell a portion of their manse site, about 70 feet frontage, for £200, and to mortgage the remainder, the proceeds to be applied to the erection of a manse.

It was agreed that the following brethren should be appointed to attend the next meeting of the Wesleyan Conference, and convey to them our fraternal congratulations:—The Moderator, Rev. Dr. Cairns, Rev. Dr. M'Donald, and Mr. R. Scott.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Pro re nata Meeting, 24th December, 1877.

Rev. R. Hamilton, Moderator.

This meeting was called on emergency business. A requisition signed by ordinary members of four Presbyteries was addressed to the Moderator, asking that a meeting should be convened for the purpose of appointing Trustees for the site at Prahran, which, as agreed upon at last Assembly, should be disposed of with the view of effecting a reduction of the debt on the Assembly Hall.

There were twenty-five members present, representing five Presbyteries.

It was agreed that Messrs. James Bennie, Thomas King Scott, and John Mark Davies should be appointed Trustees of the land referred to in room of Mr. J. Wood, deceased, and of Messrs. J. Matheson, and James Blackwood who had for a time left the Colony.

CHAPTER XI.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR.—1878.

JANUARY.—The attention of the Melbourne Presbytery was called to the lamented decease of Rev. Dr. Cameron. It was afterwards resolved to put on record an expression of esteem and affection cherished towards the departed brother.*

February.—The call from Richmond congregation came out in favour of the Rev. A. Hardie, Kilmore. It was signed by fifty members and sixty-one adherents, was accepted at the hands of the Seymour Presbytery, and the induction was effected on 18th March.

A call from Erskine Church was brought out in favour of Rev. J. W. Inglis, Ballaarat. The call was signed by thirty members and forty-six adherents, but was not accepted.

Rev. D. M'Donald, missionary from the New Hebrides, was cordially welcomed by the Presbytery of Melbourne, and was associated.

March.—The congregation of St. George's, Collingwood, brought out a call in favour of Rev. D. M'Kenzie, of Footscray. The call was signed by one hundred and eighty-two members and eighty-seven adherents. The call was accepted, and the induction took place on 1st March.

April.—Rev. A. D. Kininmont appeared before the Presbytery,

* In removing the name of the late Rev. Andrew Cameron, D.D., from the roll of Presbytery, the brethren unanimously agree to put on record their sense of the loss sustained by the Church through the lamented death of their beloved brother. Dr. Cameron was no ordinary man, and had no ordinary history as a servant of Christ. Reared in a godly household, and under a godly ministry, he gave his heart early to God, and the immediate fruit of this was early usefulness. Always bent on serving God in the ministry of the word, he was long prevented by feeble health from making any public appearance. But up to the full measure of his strength, and beyond, he devoted his rare talents to Christian literature, and originated a class of publications which are still of eminent service to the cause of Christ, and fully justifying the most important Theological Institute in America in bestowing upon him a doctor's degree. Coming to this country full of experience in various departments of Christian labour, he was welcomed as a valuable accession to those who had already been bearing the burden and heat of the day, in striving to promote the cause of gospel truth in this new land. He was found to be an able preacher of the truth, fully holding forth the doctrines of grace. His knowledge of ecclesiastical affairs in the old country made him a most competent adviser of the Church. He at once accommodated himself to the new circumstances in which he found himself in Victoria, and readily employed his voice and his pen in defence of truth and righteousness in the Colonies, as was his wont in the land of his birth. His brother ministers always found him a brother among brethren. His brethren are glad to know that, though suffering under extreme prostration, his mind was active to the end, and that he was mightily sustained by the consolations of the gospel, and their prayer for themselves is that their last end may be like his.

and stated that, through the kind providence of God, he had been blessed with a measure of restoration to health, for which he desired to express his thankfulness to God. He also wished to thank his brethren for the sympathy and aid which they had accorded to him in his affliction. He was welcomed with expressions of kind and devout satisfaction.

The attention of the Presbytery was called to the fact that the University of St. Andrew's had conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity upon an esteemed brother of the Presbytery, the Rev. P. Mercer, and great satisfaction was expressed in being able to congratulate Mr. Mercer on the graceful act of recognition thus given by his *alma mater*, not only of the distinction while a student of that University, but of the accurate acquaintance with theology, and also of scholarship, which he had since displayed, and of the many distinguished services which he had rendered to the Church in this Colony. The congratulations were acknowledged in an appropriate reply by Dr. Mercer.

May.—Mr. Alexander M'Donald, M.A., a student of the New College, Edinburgh, who had attended three sessions, was admitted to the hall as a fourth year student.

June.—A call from South Yarra congregation, and another from St. Kilda congregation, both came out in favour of Rev. Samuel Robinson, who elected to accept the latter, and the induction was effected on the 17th inst.

A call emanated from the congregation of Camperdown, Presbytery of Mortlake, in favour of Rev. W. L. Morton, Dandenong. After the people of Dandenong were heard in their own cause, Mr. Morton signified his acceptance of the call, and was set free from his charge.

July.—Erskine Church congregation had issued a call in favour of Rev. Alexander Yule, M.A., of Rutherford Free Church, Aberdeen. The usual steps were taken for getting the call presented through the Aberdeen Free Church Presbytery. At the first meeting of Presbytery, in January, 1878, it was announced that Mr. Yule had accepted the call, had arrived in the Colony a few days before, and was now present. Mr. Yule was cordially welcomed. The induction took effect by the usual services on 21st January.

A call issued from St. Arnaud, Presbytery of the Wimmera, in favour of the Rev. G. Graham, of Bacchus Marsh. After the congregation had an opportunity of expressing their mind, the call was accepted and the pastoral tie was dissolved.

Mr. W. C. Johnston, student in theology, who had passed his exit examination, and whom the Assembly of 1875 authorised the Presbytery to take on trial for license, had declined to enter on his examination, and was thereafter not under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery.

Mr. Cheong, member of the Napier-street Church, Fitzroy, called the attention of the Presbytery to the great famine at present prevailing in several provinces in the north of China, whereby hundreds of thousands were dying of starvation. It was agreed to

place on record an expression of the deep sympathy of the Presbytery with the suffering millions in these famine-stricken provinces, and that a collection be made by every congregation within the Presbytery during the present month to assist in mitigating the appalling visitation.

The Footscray congregation had agreed on a call to Rev. E. Rorke, B.A. It was signed by sixty-three members and twenty-nine adherents. The invitation was accepted, and the induction effected on 23rd inst.

An application was made by Rev. D. S. M'Eachran for leave of absence on account of impaired health. His medical advisers certified that he would require twelve months' complete rest, and he was advised to take a voyage to Great Britain. This request was, of course, readily granted, with expressions of earnest sympathy, and with prayer for his complete restoration. He would receive from the brethren all the help in their power in the supply of his pulpit. He had laid the whole Church under deep obligations by his establishing and working out the Sustentation Scheme, by the diligence and zeal he had displayed as Convener of the Church Extension Committee, and by the general interest he had taken in every measure calculated to advance the cause of Christ in the community.

August.—A few months before, attention was drawn to the fact that Rev. Dr. Cairns was about to enter on the jubilee year of his ministry, and it was proposed that the Presbytery should take some steps in order to mark their appreciation of the high Christian character which he had sustained, and the career of honourable usefulness which he had consistently followed during that lengthened period. After mature deliberation it was resolved to raise, if possible, the sum of £1,000 for the purpose of founding a scholarship in connection with the Theological Hall, to be called "The Cairns Scholarship." This, it was considered, would be a fitting commemoration of the event.

It was further arranged, in accordance with the plans of the congregation of Chalmers Church, that a public meeting should be held in the Town Hall on 24th September, that an illuminated address should be presented on behalf of the Presbytery, and the £1,000 should be given for the scholarship.

It was agreed to confirm the election of Mr. Hay Lonie, Camphill, Broadmeadows, to the trusteeship in the Union Church, Hotham, in room of Henry Beattie, resigned.

The election of the following Trustees was approved:—For Brighton, Messrs. Andrew Plunket, John Rogers, J. L. Maclure, A. Grieve, and R. G. Wilson; and for Cheltenham, Messrs. Malcolm, M'Queen, Brooks, and Brown.

September.—The sympathy of the Presbytery was expressed on behalf of Rev. A. Davidson, who, while engaged in the service of the Church in the interior of the country, met with a distressing accident, whereby he sustained a fracture of his leg.

October.—The Presbytery were occupied with an examination of the records of Boards of Management.

November.—The Presbytery, without incurring responsibility, appointed Rev. James Brown as chaplain to the Benevolent Asylum, the Melbourne Hospital, the Alfred Hospital, and the Immigrants' Home, in room of the ministers who had been appointed.

December.—The attention of Presbytery was drawn to the lamented death of Rev. R. Hunter, formerly of Kilmore. It was agreed that a letter of sympathy and condolence should be sent to the widow and family.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 7th May, 1878.

Rev. Robert Hamilton, Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	J. G. Wilson—Rosedale.
,,	,,	J. B. Reid—Mansfield.
,,	,,	J. W. M'Cutchan—District of Lower Goulburn.
,,	,,	W. C. M'Donald, M.A.—St. John's, Sandhurst.
,,	,,	W. A. Baker—Seymour.
,,	,,	G. D. Lee—Cavendish.
,,	,,	J. Kirkwood—Avoca.
,,	,,	J. Henry—Albury.
Translation	,,	A. Hardie – Richmond.
,,	,,	D. M'Kenzie—Collingwood.
,,	,,	D. S. Brunton—Ballan.
Demission	,,	J. Ballantyne—Erskine Church, Carlton.
,,	,,	F. Souter—Deniliquin.
,,	,,	A. M'Nicol—Bright.
Death	,,	Dr. Cameron—St. Kilda.
,,	,,	Hugh Darling—Emerald Hill.

There were twenty-three points of business announced.

It was intimated that it had been unanimously agreed among the ex-Moderators to nominate Rev. D. S. M'Eachran as Moderator of next Assembly. A new nomination was afterwards made.

The Committee on the Affiliated College reported that they had taken formal possession of the reserve at the University, that a substantial fence had been erected and paid for, and that measures were being taken, with encouraging tokens of success, to raise funds for the erection of the necessary buildings.

It was reported that His Excellency the Governor had forwarded to the Queen the memorial adopted by the Assembly, praying that Her Majesty should assume the protectorate of the New Hebrides, but that Her Majesty's Government had intimated in reply, that, as advised at present, they could not recommend compliance with the prayer of the memorial.

It was intimated, on behalf of the Committee on Missions to the Heathen, that they had engaged a superintendent of the Mission to the Chinese, Rev. Daniel Vrooman, late of Canton. Mr. Vrooman, having arrived, was introduced to the Assembly, and addressed the meeting. The Commission approved of the action of the Committee in appointing a superintendent of the Chinese Mission, cordially welcomed Mr. Vrooman, and bade him God-speed in his labours.

In regard to the *Presbyterian Review*, arrangements were made which, it was believed, would ensure the continued publication of

the *Review*, but no copies of the *Record* would be printed, unless ordered before the end of the current month. It appeared that a proprietary had been formed, by whom the *Review*, with all its assets and liabilities, would be taken over for the present, but they would be willing to hand it back to the Assembly, on being reimbursed for their outlay. A Committee was appointed to complete the arrangements.

The Mission Stations benefited by the Brodie Bequest were :— Tarnagulla, Wychitella, Wimmera, Duneed and Connewarre, and Heytesbury Forest.

A movement was made by the Geelong Presbytery in order to secure the collecting and preserving for future use of historical records. Many useful and interesting facts had transpired during the history of the Church, bearing on the formation of congregations, and the interests of religion in different districts. At the same time, many of the older members of the Church, who were able to communicate information on the rise and progress of Presbyterianism, were passing away. A Committee was, therefore, appointed by the Commission to inquire into the practicability of carrying the proposal into effect. Then the Assembly in November re-appointed the Committee, with power to add to their number a corresponding member in each Presbytery, and ministers and Kirk Sessions were instructed to co-operate with the Committee in preparing local records, and supplying all available information.

It was agreed that a grant of £400 should be made from the Site Fund to St. John's congregation, Sandhurst, for the purchase of land, and Trustees were nominated to hold it in trust for the Assembly, and to make the necessary advance, as soon as the congregation were in circumstances to proceed with the erection of their Church.

Rev. A. J. Campbell, and Rev. W. Henderson gave in their reports as deputies to the General Council of Presbyterian Churches held in Edinburgh in July, 1877, and also to the Churches in the Home countries. The reports were heard with special interest and satisfaction, and the cordial thanks of the Commission were given to the deputies, through the Moderator, for the manner in which they had fulfilled their trust, and for the good tidings which they had brought back relative to the vigour, the unanimity, the soundness in the faith, and the vital earnestness of the representatives of Presbyterianism in Great Britain and Ireland, throughout the Continent of Europe, in America, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and the islands of the Southern Ocean.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 11TH NOVEMBER, 1878.

REV. J. K. M'MILLAN, MODERATOR.

Induction—Rev. S. Robinson—St. Kilda West.
,, ,, E. Rorke, B.A.—Footscray.
,, ,, F. Souter—Miners' Rest and Coghill's Creek.
,, ,, A. M'Nicol—Moulamein, Riverina.
,, ,, James Macarthur—Deniliquin.

Induction	—Rev.	D. S. Maxwell—Kilmore and Broadford.
,,	,,	J. E. Armour—Woodend and Carlsrnhe.
Translation	,,	W. L. Morton—Camperdown.
,,	,,	George Graham—St. Arnaud.
Ordination	,,	J. G. Mackie—Beechworth.
,,	,,	L. Tait, B.A.—Maffra, Glenmaggie, and Newry.
Demission	,,	R. Hunter—St. Andrew's Church, Kilmore.
,,	,,	Mark Dixon—Wangaratta and Oxley.
,,	,,	J. D. Robertson—Ryrie-street Church, Geelong.
,,	,,	A. Stoker—Inglewood.
Death	,,	John Anderson—Warrnambool.
,,	,,	John Brownlie—Barrabool and Winchelsea.

It appeared that Rev. D. S. M'Eachran, who was nominated to the Moderatorship, had been compelled to leave the Colony for a time on account of ill-health. It had been arranged, therefore, to nominate Rev. John Kennedy M'Millan, B.A., of Hamilton, to the chair of the Moderator.

There were forty-five items of business in the programme.

The Home Mission Committee had the responsibility of finding supply for thirty-eight vacant charges. Besides these, there were seven mission stations supplied by lay evangelists. Settlements had been effected in twenty-three vacancies. Six of these were carried into effect by translation, the other seventeen were a clear gain in numbers to the districts in the Church which had the privilege of a settled pastor. There were twenty-two vacancies at the end of the year. To these might be added many localities in both town and country which could at once be organised into regular charges were there only suitable ministers to occupy the fields.

Of the nineteen preachers on the list the previous year, two had left the Colony, one had followed secular pursuits, ten had been settled in charges, and the remaining six continued in the service of the Church.

During the year four ministers had been received—Revs. Messrs. Maxwell (returned from Scotland), M'Farlane, Nairn, and Parke.

Two students were licensed, and subsequently ordained.

There were now nine ministers and two probationers on the list of preachers.

More ministers were required from Home, and money was needed for passage and outfit. No effort had been put forth for three years towards this object, and the ordinary income of the Home Mission was not sufficient to meet the demands that might be made upon it for sending ministers to the Colony.

A Committee had been appointed to prepare an address to be presented to Rev. Dr. Cairns on the completion of the fiftieth year of his ministry. It was agreed that it should be formally presented to him next day, at a social meeting which had been arranged, and thereafter it should be carefully engrossed, signed by the Moderator in name of the Assembly, and suitably framed, so as to become a permanent memento of the esteem in which Dr. Cairns was held by his brethen in the Assembly, and by the Church at large. See Appendix (F.)

A firm tone continued to be manifested by the Assembly in bearing witness against the purely secular system of general education established by Government, and in favour of religious instruction being imparted to the children of the State-schools, at the same time admitting of a conscience clause.

A deep anxiety was maintained in the Assembly on the subject of Sabbath observance. Renewed instructions on this occasion were given to the Committee on the State of Religion to act with the Presbyteries in seeking the promotion of godliness throughout the Churches, and for this purpose to employ evangelistic deputies to visit such congregations and districts as they may be able to overtake, and generally to watch over the interests of Christianity and of pure morality. The Assembly especially approved of the circulation of evangelical literature, and thanked the gentlemen whose endeavours had been liberal in this matter. It was enjoined on all to watch over the subject of Sabbath sanctification, and to use their best efforts at once to promote the right observance of the Lord's Day, and to seek the repression of all forms of desecration.

Rev. D. Vrooman having been a member of the Presbytery of Canton in full standing, the same *status* was assigned to him in this Church, and his name for the present was entered on the roll of the Presbytery of Ballaarat.

An earnest discussion ensued from a recommendation made by the Presbytery of Gippsland relative to outlying districts. The suggestion was that an agent should be appointed for a year, by way of experiment, to visit outlying districts, organise new charges, and take the superintendence of Home Mission operations, as well as to advocate generally all the missions and schemes of the Church. So important did the recommendation appear that a Conference was held, and the conviction was deepened that an agent ought to be appointed for the objects specified, and that the Home Mission Committee should make the necessary arrangements for the work of the agent, and for the requisite funds to meet the supply of his pulpit and his travelling expenses.

After still further deliberation, it was unanimously agreed to appoint to this important agency Rev. James Nish, and to send a deputation to visit and confer with the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Sandhurst, in reference to the supply of their pulpit, and the pastoral superintendence of the congregation during the temporary absence of their minister while fulfilling the duties of this appointment.

It was agreed to send through the Governor a loyal address to the Queen.

In regard to the Infirm Ministers' Fund, it was gratifying to find that there was a steady growth of the capital, and that the money was judiciously invested. There were three annuitants on the fund, and three had been removed by death. Other two applications were approved. The amount of the capital was now £9,693 18s. 8d.

An application was made on behalf of Rev. T. Laver, formerly belonging to the Independent body, to be admitted into the Church.

Upon full inquiry, it was found that Mr. Laver had received adequate literary and theological training for the work of the ministry; that he had adopted as scriptural Presbyterian views of Church polity; that the character which he sustained in connection with a sister denomination had been irreproachable; and that he was fitted to be extensively useful in the ministry of this Church. Mr. Laver was commended to the Home Mission Committee for employment, a report to be submitted to next Assembly as to his usefulness and acceptability.

A deputation from the Wesleyan Conference was introduced to the Assembly. The Rev. Dr. Dare, Rev. W. L. Binks, and Hon. A. Frazer, M.L.C., were cordially welcomed. They addressed the Assembly in succession. The Assembly, in reply, assured them of their unabated fraternal attachment, and their high admiration of their zeal and devotedness, especially in the pioneer work of evangelisation, and further expressed their desire to have the bond of connection between them and this Church more firmly knit and strengthened. The Moderator conveyed the cordial thanks of the Assembly for the eloquent, instructive, and stirring addresses to which they had been privileged to listen.

The Assembly agreed to appoint Rev. Dr. M'Donald, Rev. J. Nish, and Mr. J. MacBain as a deputation to attend the next annual meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales. The Rev. A. M'Vean and Rev. M. M'Donald were appointed a deputation to attend the next annual meeting of the Presbytery of South Australia; and Rev. J. W. Inglis was appointed to represent the Assembly at the next annual meeting of the Synod of Otago and Southland.

On the report respecting a theological professor, the Assembly expressed cordial thanks to the esteemed brethren of the Commission at Home, and especially to the Rev. Dr. Cairns, the Convener, for the zeal manifested in the execution of the trust committed to them. They regretted the failure of the efforts put forth by the Commission to obtain for this Church the services of a Principal and Primarius Professor for our Theological Hall, and they requested the honoured brethren of the Commission at Home to continue their labours on our behalf; to correspond with the Rev. Dr. Dykes, of London, and urge him to accept the office; and, in the event of his refusal, to put the office for acceptance before the Rev. Mr. Laidlaw, of Aberdeen.

In relation to changes in Church property, it was arranged that the Trustees of any Church, manse, or school should be allowed to have the land reserved brought under a special Act, so as to be able to obtain a formal title, and to have power to sell, lease, or mortgage any part or parts thereof.

The Trustees of the manse property at Buninyong were authorised to exchange the present manse and the land adjoining for a more commodious and convenient residence in the township.

The congregation at Stratford, having recently separated from the congregation at Maffra, obtained leave to dispose of Church property

belonging to them at Maffra, and to apply the proceeds towards the purchase of a more valuable site at Stratford.

With reference to the Affiliated College, it was reported that earnest efforts had been put forth to carry out the work prescribed last year. A circular had been issued, setting forth the two great objects of the College—To build and endow an Institution which would be a College of Residence for students attending the University, and a Theological Hall for the training of ministers. It was felt that, in order to secure for the future ministry of the Church the most effective training that could be obtained, the Theological Hall ought to be affiliated to the University.

In order to fully equip the College, a large amount of money would be required—"1. For the building; 2. For an endowment for the head of the College; 3. Exhibitions or bursaries for theological students, to enable them to reside within the College."

The idea entertained last year, respecting the sum that would be required in order to make a commencement, was, that £10,000 would be necessary for the erection of the College. Vigorous efforts were made to raise this amount, but it soon became evident that a larger sum would be required to carry out the objects which the Church had in view. Accordingly, the liberality of those who were interested in the scheme increased as the conviction of its importance forced itself upon them. Subscriptions originally put down at £200 were raised to £500, then one gentleman promised £1,000, provided other £9,000 were raised by the Church. An effort was at once made to fulfil the condition.

At the same time, the reserve was fenced, Trustees were gazetted, and steps were taken to obtain the Crown grant. Before this could issue, it was necessary to get plans prepared of the proposed College, which must be submitted to the University Council for approval. This was successfully done, and now the Crown grant was expected to issue within a few weeks. At this stage, when subscriptions had reached £6,000, and when the ability to claim the £1,000 that were conditionally offered seemed within sight, a letter was received from Francis Ormond, Esq., which brightened still further the encouraging prospect.

After commenting in his letter on the importance of the proposed College, and on the necessity of enlarged liberality in order to establish on a firm basis an institution which would be a credit to the denomination, and be of eminent service to the future ministry of the Church, he generously offered to increase his subscription to £10,000, provided that a like amount, so as to make the whole sum £20,000, was raised from other sources, before the close of the year, and paid in instalments within twelve months.

The Committee, on receipt of this magnificent proposal, agreed to put forth strenuous efforts in order to raise the £4,000 still required, to enable them to claim the splendid offer. And in token of their appreciation of Mr. Ormond's liberality, it was agreed by the Assembly that the new affiliated Institution should receive the name of the "Ormond College." The lay members of the Church

were earnestly invited by the Supreme Court to contribute to the scheme without delay, in order to put the Church in a position to accept Mr. Ormond's munificent proposal. It was recommended by the Committee that the Council of the affiliated College be appointed as soon as possible. The General Assembly elected the following gentlemen as their representatives on the Council:—Rev. A. J. Campbell, Rev. Dr. M'Donald, Rev. Charles Strong, Rev. Murdoch Macdonald, Rev. James Abernethy, Rev. James Nish, James Balfour, Esq., and Professor Strong. As soon as £20,000 were raised, the subscribers should be called upon to elect eight members as their representatives. The Council were instructed to proceed without delay to the erection of the new College, and in the course of the year to make inquiries with the view of being able to submit the name of a gentleman as Principal to next General Assembly. In addition to the amount required for building, efforts were enjoined to raise £10,000 at least as an Endowment Fund. The necessity for founding additional bursaries was to be kept before the Church, and the Assembly acknowledged their gratitude to God for the success which had so far attended the undertaking.

With few exceptions, the money had been raised from our wealthy landowners, who, in such critical times, have set a noble example of princely generosity and public spirit. There were many predictions of failure, but there was faith in the scheme, and in the liberality of the Church, and the result showed that their confidence was not misplaced.

It was agreed that the College should be governed by a Council of twenty-four members, consisting of eight Trustees, eight members appointed by the General Assembly, and eight by the subscribers, four of each class of the elective members of Council to retire annually by rotation, but to be eligible for re-election.

The Council were instructed to proceed with the erection so as to have it ready for the reception of students at the commencement of the February term, 1880.

The Committee were instructed generally to mature all matters by next Assembly, so as to have all necessary arrangements completed for the efficient carrying out of the scheme.

It was considered that the sum of £20,000 would not be sufficient to carry out all the objects in view. Of the £20,000, from £10,000 to £13,000 would be required for the erection of the building, the plans of which would allow of further extension. £6,000 or £7,000 would remain for the Endowment Fund. The annual proceeds of this sum would not be sufficient for the income of the Principal, hence the necessity of keeping the subscription list open, with a view to raising the Endowment Fund to £10,000. It would be necessary also to secure as many additional bursaries as possible, in order to enable theological students to reside in the College, and these scholarships should bear the name of the donors.

Events of the Year.—1879.

January.—Rev. Hugh Macfarlane, recently arrived from Scotland, received a call to Bacchus Marsh, signed by sixty members and fifty-eight adherents. He had been an ordained minister of the United Presbyterian Church in Oban, Argyleshire. He was admitted into full standing as a minister of this Church by the Home Mission Committee. He cordially accepted the call, and was inducted on Monday, 20th.

Rev. Alexander Yule, M.A., minister of the Free Church of Scotland, had accepted the call from Erskine Church, Carlton, which had been transmitted to the Presbytery of Aberdeen. He had just arrived, and was cordially welcomed. His induction was effected on 21st.

Messrs. W. M. M. Alexander, J. A. Taylor, W. L. Fenton, A. M'Lean, and A. Macdonald, who had completed their studies at the Hall, were licensed to preach the gospel by the Melbourne Presbytery.

February.—Rev. George Wilson Adam resigned his office as Trustee of the congregation at Elsternwick.

The Presbytery of Melbourne were privileged to receive a visit from Pastor Chiniquy, a converted priest of the Church of Rome, now a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Canada. He had been for many years an honoured minister of the Canadian Church. He had laboured chiefly as an evangelist among the French-speaking people of the Dominion. He had been instrumental in inducing several priests of the Church of Rome to embrace the Protestant faith, and in bringing numbers of Roman Catholic people to a knowledge of the truth in Christ Jesus He had often been in danger of losing his life because of his faithfulness in denouncing error, and in proclaiming the doctrines of grace. In consequence of impaired health, he had obtained one year's leave of absence from the General Assembly. He came commended to the sympathy and fellowship of other Christian Churches. The Presbytery gave him a hearty welcome, expressed their sympathy with him in his work, and earnestly prayed that the blessing of God would henceforth as heretofore attend his labours.

Rev. Mr. Neilson, missionary from the New Hebrides, also received a cordial welcome. He was on his way to the Home country for the benefit of his health. He gave a short but effective address, urging the claims of the mission, and especially the necessity that existed for additional labourers being sent into the mission field.

The South Yarra congregation brought out a call in favour of Rev. John M'Pherson, M.A., of Hilltown Free Church, Dundee, Scotland. It was signed by one hundred and twenty-four members and ninety-five adherents. The call, however, was declined.

March.—The congregation of Yarraville was separated from Footscray, and formed into a separate mission charge.

April.—A numerous body of workmen had been employed on a

Sabbath recently in connection with the terminus of the Oakleigh railway at Prince's Bridge, whereby the poor labourers had been deprived of their Sabbath rest, the law of the land trampled upon, and the feelings of the religious community outraged. Not only so, the Honourable the Commissioner of Railways had chosen that day for inspecting the new line in its entire length, accompanied by sub-officials and friends. The Melbourne Presbytery felt the responsibility of taking steps to mark their unqualified disapprobation of such proceedings on the part of the Minister of Railways. Accordingly they agreed to record their strong protest against the public desecration of the Lord's Day so wantonly perpetrated, and also to draw up a remonstrance to be presented to the Government on the subject. The Chief Secretary, in reply to a deputation, said the Government were most desirous of securing the Sabbath rest in its entirety, and would do their best to prevent such occurrences in future.

A long-continued and disastrous drought had prevailed throughout the land. The Presbytery deemed it necessary to call the attention of the congregation to the threatening aspect of Providence, and to the duty of humiliation and prayer on the occasion.

May.—It was agreed by the Presbytery, in accordance with the wish of the congregation at Oakleigh, to assume the supervision of the people associated there for worship. The late Rev. George Mackie had originated the Church as a mission station, and it had been under the superintendence of the South Yarra Session.

The students at the hall were Messrs. S. Weir, W. H. Gray, F. C. Howe, R. Rock, J. Scott, and J. Spalding.

June.—Rev. J. L. Rentoul, M.A., of the Presbyterian Church of England, had arrived, for whom a call by anticipation was brought out by the East St. Kilda congregation, and was lying on the table of the Presbytery. He was cordially welcomed, and the call being presented, was accepted. The induction was effected on 23rd.

Rev. A. Davidson, of John Knox Church, received a call from the Ryrie-street congregation, Geelong. The members of John Knox Church would offer no opposition, should he see it to be his duty to leave. He accepted, and was freed from his charge.

July.—The appointment of Rev. D. Mackenzie as visiting chaplain to the Presbyterian inmates of the Yarra Bend Asylum, and of Rev. F. R. M. Wilson as chaplain to the Presbyterian inmates of the Asylum at Kew, was confirmed.

August.—The Presbytery declared that they discountenanced the employment of ministers and preachers, who were not in connection with the Church, in their vacant charges and mission stations as unfair to their own licentiates, and as leading to the introduction of unqualified persons into their pulpits.

September.—On 18th August a congregational meeting had been held in John Knox Church, when a very sad resolution was adopted. It was to the effect "that in the present unsatisfactory and reduced state of the congregation, financially and numerically, it is expedient in the judgment of this meeting, for the purpose of

avoiding further monetary obligations, that the regular public worship be discontinued from and after the end of August, 1879, and that the Trustees be empowered by this meeting to take steps to carry this resolution into effect, and also to deal with, or dispose of, the Church property in such a manner as to enable them to liquidate all legal and equitable claims upon such Church and congregation."

A formidable barrier in the way of the congregation's prosperity was the huge debt of £2,165. Their financial responsibilities had been crushing them for many years, even from the time of rebuilding their place of worship. They had struggled manfully amid very many and heavy discouragements, but at last they felt compelled to succumb. It looked like a calamity to the whole Church to see the old pioneer congregation of the Free Church Body obliged to face the dire prospect of extinction. The Presbytery and Assembly put forth extraordinary efforts to maintain and resuscitate the cause, but after three years' strenuous efforts, the Trustees were obliged to dispose of the property. It was purchased for a place of worship by the "Disciples of Christ."

Rev. D. S. M'Eachran had returned to the Colony, and to his charge, in renewed health and strength, and was warmly welcomed.

The South Yarra congregation had brought out a call in favour of Rev. D. S. Maxwell, of Kilmore and Broadford. He accepted the invitation conveyed to him by the Presbytery of Seymour, and he was inducted into his charge on 29th.

November.—It was agreed to authorise the conduct of public religious service at Preston by the Rev. Mr. Manby, according to the desire of the people.

The Presbytery resolved to send a letter of sympathy and condolence to Rev. Dr. Cairns and family on the occasion of the death of his daughter, Mrs. W. P. Muir.

A call was laid on the table, which had been brought out by St. Andrew's Church, Launceston, in favour of Rev. J. Lyle, North Carlton. The call was accepted, and he was released from his charge.

Messrs. W. Webster and W. Gray were recommended to the Assembly for authority to be taken on trial with a view to license.

The East St. Kilda congregation were desirous of enlarging their place of worship, and obtaining the sanction of the Assembly to their mortgaging the Church property for a portion of the amount necessary for the purpose.

December.—Rev. J. Cooper, of Coburg, obtained leave of absence for twelve months, with the view of visiting the Home country to superintend the publication of a work in defence of Christian truth.

Rev. Mr. Angus, a Free Church minister from Scotland, recently arrived, was introduced to the Presbytery, and was cordially welcomed.

Rev. J. Clark obtained leave of absence for twelve months, on a medical recommendation that he should leave the Colony at as early a date as possible, as his health required a change.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 6TH MAY, 1879.

REV. JOHN KENNEDY M'MILLAN, B.A., MODERATOR.

Induction—Rev.	H. Macfarlane—Bacchus Marsh.	
,,	,,	A. Yule, M.A.—Erskine Church, Carlton.
,,	,,	George Tait, M.A.—Warrnambool.
Demission	,,	J. W. Taylor—Maldon.
,,	,,	W. A. Lind—Lancefield.
,,	,,	G. W. Adam—Horsham.
,,	,,	T. Edwards—Chiltern.
Death	,,	D. Renton—Heathcote.

It was resolved to present a congratulatory address to the Marquis of Normanby on his appointment to the Governorship of the Colony.

The regulations of the Cairns Jubilee Scholarship adopted by the Presbytery of Melbourne were approved of.

Rev. J. Nish was appointed to act as representative of this Church, in accordance with the provisions of the Successory Trusts Act.

It was agreed that the Monday evening of the second week of the Assembly be utilised by the delivery of popular addresses on topics of interest connected with the religious thought and movements of the day, and that there should be prepared illustrations of sacred music and Christian song, to be interspersed with the addresses.

Rev. James Megaw was nominated as the Moderator-elect of next Assembly.

The case of the Ebenezer Church, Ballaarat, was brought under consideration, in consequence of the age and infirmity of Rev. R. T. Walker, M.A.

The Horsham congregation engaged attention on account of a temporary difficulty.

The question respecting a Theological Professor from Home necessarily commanded a measure of attention. The question was whether it was expedient to take any further steps in the way of obtaining a permanent head of the Theological Hall, the effort already made having failed, and whether it would not be preferable as an interim expedient to amend present arrangements for the management of the Hall. Pending the settlement of these questions, it was agreed to send intimation to the Home Commissioners that operations had been suspended, and thank them for their past services.

The Hastie Bequest called for some notice. It was resolved that a case, agreed on by the beneficiaries and trustees of the will, together with the next of kin, should be submitted for the opinion of two eminent Counsel in England.

An inquiry had been made into the chaplaincies to public institutions. It appeared that the allowances made by the State to this Church for services rendered to prisoners was £170 per annum, which hitherto had been allotted to two brethren, one receiving £120, and the other £50, and that in the event of a chaplain being

appointed for Kew and Yarra Bend Asylums, a share of the vote could be claimed, which would be only a very small sum. The minister at Kew was appointed chaplain to the asylum there.

The Mission Stations which were now benefited by the Brodie Bequest were—Tarnagulla, Wychitella, Yea, Pine Lodge, Dromana, Heytesbury East, Heytesbury West, Duneed, and Connewarre.

The Commission recognised with much gratification the services of Rev. J. Nish as agent of the Church. It was proposed to raise a special fund for bringing out preachers and students from the Home Churches.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 10TH NOVEMBER, 1879.

REV. J. MEGAW, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	W. A. Lind—Batesford, Sutherland's Creek, and Russell's Bridge.
,,	,,	J. Laurence Rentoul, M.A.—St. Kilda East.
,,	,,	A. Stoker—Golden Square, Axedale, and Goornong.
Translation	,,	D. S. Maxwell—South Yarra.
,,	,,	A. Davidson—Ryrie-street, Geelong.
Ordination	,,	W. M. M. Alexander—Bright.
,,	,,	A. S. M'Lean—Heathcote.
Demission	,,	R. J. Smith, B.A.—Meredith (called to Wentworth).
,,	,,	J. M'Cutchan—Lower Goulburn.
Death	,,	W. Hamilton—Kilnoorat.

There were one hundred and thirty on the roll of the ministry, including three ministers *emeriti* and the Chinese Superintendent.

Forty-seven items were presented in the programme of business.

On the report of the state of religion, it was resolved by the Assembly, "To renew their instructions to the ministers of the Church to seasonably warn the people against gambling and other forms of prevalent vice—to enjoin the Committee to watch over the interests of morality—to use every effort in their power to promote the diffusion of sound literature—to advance as widely as possible the blessings of vital Christianity—and to employ deputations for these purposes, who should act in harmony with the Presbyteries, which they are appointed to visit."

In connection with the Home Mission operations, the Assembly recognised, "That in all the Presbyteries of the Church there were new spheres of labour waiting to be occupied by suitable ministers—enjoined Presbyteries and the Home Mission Committee to co-operate in fostering these fields of usefulness—noted, with satisfaction, that the Committee had been able to follow the adherents of this Church, who had passed over into the neighbouring region of Riverina, with the means of grace—rejoiced that a few ministers of undoubted gifts and graces had joined the ranks of the ministry in this Church during the past year, and looked to the Home Churches to send further supplies of the same class—were much pleased to hear of the promising usefulness of the preachers who were licentiates of this Church—and they instructed the Committee to engage suitable lay agents where licensed preachers are not obtainable, always taking

care that such agents be men of Christian character, as well as of creditable attainments, and that their work be watchfully superintended."

There had been thirty-one vacancies throughout the year, for which supply required to be provided. Seven fields were occupied by lay evangelists. Ten settlements had been effected; and there were twenty-two vacancies with which to begin the work of the year. Four ministers had been received from Home Churches; and five students had been licensed during the year. Seven students attending the Theological Hall had rendered important service in various localities by evangelistic work.

Rev. J. Nish had done good work as agent. By his great zeal, his ready talent, and his abundant knowledge of the condition of the Colony, his labours were invaluable. He brought to light the spiritual necessities of many districts which presented fields of usefulness, but with sorrow it had to be confessed that suitable labourers were a-wanting to enter the openings.

The Presbytery of Melbourne were instructed to take Mr William Webster on trial, with a view to his ordination as a minister in the Middle Darling District of New South Wales, and on his entering on his duties at Menindie his name was to be added to the roll of the Presbytery of Castlemaine.

Rev. T. Laver was duly received into full standing as a minister of the Church.

An application from a new arrival to the Home Mission Committee for admission into the Church was referred to the Assembly, when the Committee were instructed to receive him on probation, and to deal with him as in their judgment might seem best.

With the prospect of an International Exhibition being held in Melbourne next year, a large Committee were appointed to consider the requirements of the case, and to take such steps as might meet the responsibilities of this Church.

The Assembly approved of a proposal, introduced by Rev. A. M'Vean, which looked in the direction of the federation of the Presbyterian Churches of Australasia. The overture set forth that it was important that these Churches should have uniform standards of doctrine, &c., and should co-operate with each other in strengthening themselves, and extending their operations in the various mission-fields.

Rev. R. S. Duff, M.A., of Evandale, Tasmania; Rev. R. M. Webster, of Chalmers Church, Hobart Town; and Rev. J. Profit, minister of the parish of St. Mungo, Scotland, were welcomed in the name of the Assembly, and were invited to take their seats as associated members of the Court.

The report of the Sustentation Fund Committee was not so bright and cheering this year. The dividend paid to ministers of aid-receiving congregations had fallen to £30. The year before the dividend had been £40; the first year it was £50. The deficiency might be at least partially accounted for by the adverse condition of the country in trade and commerce. Some congregations at times

suffer much from unfavourable seasons in the matter of drought. There was no contribution this year from six congregations, which had contributed the previous year £114. Six gentlemen had continued their handsome donation of £100 each. No efforts had been spared to obtain subscriptions, and deputations had visited many congregations in the different Presbyteries in order to awaken interest in the fund. J. C. M'Naughton, Esq., who recently passed away, had bequeathed to the fund the handsome sum of £2,000.

The Assembly could only express regret that the fund did not meet with that liberal support from the Church as a whole to which it was entitled by its great importance, enjoined ministers to press its claims upon their congregations, and instructed Presbyteries to watch over its interests.

The subject of Heathen Missions usually attracts the fixed attention of the Christian Church. These missions excite the greatest interest in the Assembly. The evening when the report is given is invariably one, both of numerous attendance and of earnest consideration by the members, while the general audience is large and attentive.

The aborigines at Ramahyuck had suffered much during the year from sickness and death. No fewer than ten of the little community had passed away, and there had been only two births. Decrease among the natives goes on apace. An old woman, perhaps the oldest aboriginal woman in the Colony, had died. She had been in the times of heathenism a medicine-woman, or enchantress. About five years before her decease she became impressed with the truths of the gospel. She was baptised in 1875, and continued a faithful servant of the Lord till her death. A young man who got a good education at this station, and went to South Australia to be an assistant teacher, was soon called away to his rest. From the testimony of the missionary at this place, he died as a redeemed sinner, who had found peace in the Son of God. Of the rest, two young women, one married, the other unmarried, and a little girl twelve years of age, all died in the faith of Jesus as the Saviour of sinners, trusting in Him alone for salvation, and rejoicing in the hope of coming glory. Through these losses the number of Church members had been reduced from fifty-five to fifty-one.

As to the New Hebrides, this important mission was supported by a confederacy of Presbyterian Churches, connected with Scotland, British America, and the Australasian Colonies. The Church of Victoria supports two ordained missionaries, contributes largely to the Native Teachers' Fund, and gives, through her Sabbath-school children, £500 a year to the maintenance of the *Dayspring* mission ship. The missionary staff consists at present of one hundred and twelve labourers, ten ordained missionaries with their wives ; two European lay agents, one of whom was married, the other being single, and eighty-nine native teachers. The mission embraces nine islands, and the Word of God was opened, to a greater or less extent, in six languages and two dialects. In Aneityum, the natives would soon have the entire scriptures in their own language.

A new departure was agreed upon in regard to the employment of a lay missionary, who should not only be an evangelist, but a teacher of industries. This, however, was an expensive experiment, and both painful and fruitless.

As to the Chinese, the Superintendent seemed to be labouring diligently at his post in Ballaarat. The number of agents was reduced to two besides himself. These were John Ah Wai at Beechworth, and James Ah Kee at Brighton. There was the prospect of engaging a third, who had been trained at the seminary in Fitzroy at his own expense, James Ah Chue. This was a superior man, in point of both natural and acquired ability, as well as decided Christian principle, and good acquaintance with scripture. He had made eminent progress at the seminary. Three fields were open for labourers—Ararat, Talbot, and Maryborough.

The great drawback to the progress in the missions to the heathen in the Colony was the want of funds. An urgent appeal was made by the Convener—"If the Church is to go forward in this work, £1,000 for the Chinese Mission, £300 for the Aborigines, and £700 for the New Hebrides—£2,000—is the small sum that will suffice. This sum will not be judged out of proportion to our resources, if it is borne in mind that the annual income of the Church is £60,000. It is only eight-pence for each individual connected with us, or two shillings and eight-pence for each of the 15,000 members in our communion—that is two-pence three farthings a month, or less than three farthings a week. Surely not an extravagant sum for heathen missions."

A call was brought out at Yarrawonga, signed by one hundred and sixty members and adherents of the Church, in favour of Rev. J. D. Robertson, and pledging themselves to raise the minimum stipend, on and after October, 1880. The Presbytery of Beechworth asked advice from the Assembly in the case, because there had not been a moderation according to the Rules. The Presbytery were instructed to proceed with the induction of Rev. J. D. Robertson at Yarrawonga in the usual manner.

With regard to Ormond College, it was reported that the plans of the building were carefully considered, and tenders were accepted at a cost of £16,500. The sum formerly subscribed had now, without any special efforts, reached £19,000. It was expected that the erection might be complete by next Assembly, and it was exceedingly desirable that there should be appointed a head for Ormond College, and that two permanent professors should be selected from among the ministers of the Church. For this purpose the Endowment Fund would require to be greatly increased. The sum in hand, £15,000, should, indeed, be expanded to £20,000. The whole subject would need to be matured by the meeting of Commission, and finally settled by the Assembly. The suggestions were approved.

The Council of Ormond College were instructed to make all necessary inquiries, so as to be able to recommend to next Assembly a Principal for the College, and to act in concert with the Theological Hall Committee with a view to enlarging the Endowment Fund.

Rev. R. S. Duff, M.A., addressed the Assembly, and gave an in-

teresting account of the state of the Church in Tasmania, for which he received the thanks of the Assembly.

Rev. J. Nish was appointed delegate to represent this Church at the General Council, to meet in Philadelphia on 21st September, 1880.

In the Ladies' College report it appeared that ten pupils went up to the Matriculation Examination, and all of them had passed. It was considered only just to all the young ladies who distinguished themselves to claim for their school an equal place with the best boys' school in Victoria.

The revenue of the Scotch College had increased, amounting this year to £8,770. The percentage received by the Church was £1,096. Twenty-nine boys had passed the Matriculation Examination. An arrangement had been made, whereby seven acres of valuable ground in the Richmond reserve had been obtained for the boys' recreation.

Events of the Year.—1880.

January.—Mr. W. Webster was licensed on the 6th January, and was ordained on the 19th by the Presbytery of Melbourne to the charge of the Middle Darling District, New South Wales.

March.—Mr. William Bonthron received a certificate of his standing as a Probationer of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, because he contemplated leaving this Colony for New South Wales.

Mr. Michael Riordan, lately in connection with the Church of Rome, was introduced to the Presbytery as an educated convert who was desirous of admission into the ministry of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. In his application he stated that he had been educated for the priesthood of the Church of Rome; that he had prosecuted his studies, first, in the College of All Hallows, Dublin, and thereafter in the seminary of St. Joseph, Troy, New York, America; that he had received preparatory orders, and had been sent to Brisbane, Queensland, for ordination; that he had undergone a change of views on vital questions, and, especially, that he now entertained the belief that salvation was attainable through Christ alone, and not through the works of men; that, in consequence of this change, he had resolved to renounce the Romish Church with its errors and corruptions, and seek admission into the Presbyterian communion; and that, as threats had been uttered against him in Queensland, it had been deemed advisable that he should make application to the Presbytery of Melbourne. A Committee were appointed to confer with him. Afterwards, Rev. Dr. Cairns undertook, at the Presbytery's request, to take him under his charge, and superintend his theological studies, Rev. A. M'Vean to assist in Mr. Riordan's studies in Hebrew.

Rev. J. Beattie tendered his resignation of the charge of the congregation of Chalmers Church. The congregation acquiesced, only because they understood that his resolution was fixed, on account of the strain on his health being too great for him to remain

longer in such an important charge. He was consequently relieved. It was with expressions of high regard that the Presbytery consented to the separation.

Rev. H. M'Kail was appointed chaplain to the Government institution at Sunbury.

A day of thanksgiving for seasonable rains and a plentiful harvest was agreed upon for all the congregations within the bounds.

Mr. J. Spalding, student, had been prosecuting missionary work at Dromana and the neighbouring district, but his appointment there would cease at the end of the month.

Mr. Gray, student in theology, having finished his preparatory studies, was licensed to preach the gospel.

Rev. J. S. Boyd, who was about to visit Sydney, was furnished at his request with a certificate of his standing as a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

April.—Rev. W. M. Mackie received a call from Lancefield, but declined acceptance.

Mr. W. M'Donald was transferred as a student in theology from Auckland, New Zealand, to a similiar standing in this Church. He was appointed to do mission work at Yarraville.

Mr. William Shiels, student of the University of Melbourne, who had completed the first year of the course for the degree of Bachelor of Laws, applied for admission to the Theological Hall. His application was transferred to the Examining Board.

May.—Rev. E. Rorke, B.A., received a call from North Carlton, but he declined acceptance.

June.—Rev. A. M'Nicol was appointed to do mission work in Dromana and the district.

July.—A call issued from Chalmers Church, East Melbourne, in favour of Rev. Robert Scott, M.A., late of the United Presbyterian Church, Glasgow, who was expected to arrive within a few days. It was signed by two hundred and thirty-four members and seventy-two adherents. The invitation was accepted, and the induction was effected on 27th.

Rev. J. Manby had resigned his charge of Campbellfield and Epping, and the congregation acquiescing, the tie was dissolved.

August.—Rev. J. Cooper was congratulated on his safe return from a visit Home.

The North Carlton congregation brought out a call in favour of Rev. T. Macgregor, M.A. It was accepted, and the induction was carried into effect on the 17th.

September.—A deputation, in the interest of the Pastoral Aid Society, was introduced to the Melbourne Presbytery. Rev. Dr. Bromby, Rev. H. N. Wollaston, and Mr. A. N. P. Wollaston, Secretary to the Society, appeared, and addressed the Presbytery. The deputation was cordially welcomed and thanked. Good wishes were expressed for the success of the Society.

October.—A petition was forwarded by the congregation of Coburg against any attempt that might be made at the meeting of

Assembly to interfere with the allowance granted for the chaplaincy of Pentridge, over which the Church had not hitherto exercised any control.

It was reported that Mr. W. K. Thomson was prepared to give a grant of land at Suva, the new capital of Fiji, for the erection of a Church and manse in connection with the Presbyterian Church. And if the Presbytery were willing to appoint a deputation to visit the place, he would bear the expenses incurred by the journey. Mr. Thomson was cordially thanked. Rev. D. Fraser was appointed.

It was agreed to petition the Legislature against the passing of the Bill proposing to legalise the totalisator, an instrument of gambling.

November.—It was deemed proper that application might now be made to the Assembly for authority to take Mr. Riordan on examination for license.

December.—Mr. Michael Riordan was licensed on the 7th to preach the glorious gospel.

Notice of motion for next meeting of Presbytery was given to the following effect:—"Whereas an article in the October number of the *Victorian Review*, by the Rev. Charles Strong, on the subject of the atonement, has caused serious uneasiness to many ministers and members of the Church, by what appears to them to be the unsatisfactory character of its teaching." The Presbytery resolved that an opportunity be afforded Mr. Strong to confer with them, in the hope that he may give such explanations as will remove the feeling of uneasiness occasioned by the article.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 4TH MAY, 1880.

REV. J. MEGAW, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	J. Thomson (collegiate)—Ebenezer Church, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	John Cameron—Rupanyup.
,,	,,	J. Paton—Horsham.
,,	,,	J. D. Robertson—Yarrawonga.
,,	,,	G. W. Adam—Urana.
Translation	,,	J. Steel, M.A.—Kilmore and Broadford.
,,	,,	R. J. Smith, B.A.—Wentworth.
Ordination	,,	A. M'Donald, M.A.—Wangarratta and Oxley.
,,	,,	J. Urquhart—Edenhope and Apsley.
,,	,,	W. Webster—Middle Darling.
Demission	,,	J. Lyle—North Carlton; called to Launceston, Tasmania.
,,	,,	W. Campbell—Carngham, Linton, and Chepstowe.
,,	,,	J. Groundwater—Tarraville and Port Albert.
,,	,,	J. Greig, M.A.—Yackandandah.
,,	,,	J. Russell—Newstead and Guildford; called to Evandale, Tasmania.
,,	,,	J. Beattie—Chalmers Church, East Melbourne.
,,	,,	J. Dykes—Mortlake, Hexham, and Woorndoo.
,,	,,	J. S. Muir—Wickliffe, Lake Bolac, Chatsworth, and Glen Thompson.
,,	,,	J. Dick—Lydiard-street, Ballaarat.

There were twenty-one items of business stated.

The Commission having been informed that Rev. A. J. Campbell, Geelong, had suffered a severe bereavement, a deputation was appointed to convey to Mr. Campbell the assurance of their sympathy and their condolence with him under his great affliction.

It was agreed to sanction the originating of a periodical for communication with the members of the Church, giving missionary and other Church intelligence to the people, to be published monthly at the price of two-pence a number.

The progress of matters affecting Ormond College in all the elements of substantial organisation and prosperity was highly gratifying. The subscribers had been called upon to elect eight of their number to represent them on the Council. The rule of voting laid down was that subscribers of £100 or less should have one vote; those of £200, two votes; those of £300, three votes, and that no subscriber should have more than three votes. The eight members elected were:—Sir James M'Culloch, Mr. Andrew Harper, M.A., B.D., Mr. John Matheson, Mr. Robert Simson, Mr. William Taylor, Mr. James Aitken, Mr. Charles Officer, Mr. James Kininmont. The Council of twenty-four members was now complete, there being eight Trustees and eight members chosen by the General Assembly.

Special efforts were required to promote the enlargement of the Endowment Fund; and the prospect of this end being accomplished was brightened exceedingly by a letter received from F. Ormond, Esq., the generous spirit who threw so much animation into the whole enterprise from the beginning. The letter was dated Pau, France, 5th February, 1880. He stated that he had received information from the newspapers, showing that His Excellency the Governor had laid the foundation stone of the College in the presence of a large assemblage. He expressed thanks to the Marquis of Normanby for also attending the meeting at the Athenæum, and proposing "Prosperity to the College."

Mr. Ormond then referred to the necessity of a competent endowment for professors. He would have not only a complete and unencumbered College, but one provided with an efficient working staff of teachers. Towards such a consummation, on being advised that the conditions contained in his letter of 29th October, 1878, had been complied with, he said, "I shall offer to pay the cost (£2,571) of erection of tower to College, and, further, to contribute £2,500 in augmentation, or rather as commencement, of Endowment Fund for professors; provided that £7,500 are raised from other sources before the close of this year. This £10,000 additional to the £15,000 in hand would give us £25,000 as an endowment for salaries to the professors."

It was agreed that the best thanks of the Assembly be given to Mr. Ormond, with an intimation that they cordially accepted his generous offer, and they were resolved to make a vigorous effort to raise the £7,500 within the time specified, and instruct the Council to mature all matters, so that at the next General Assembly arrangements might be made for the appointment of a Principal, and for the efficient conduct of Ormond College in its twofold character,

as a Theological Hall for the training of ministers, and a College of Residence for students attending the University.

Rev. A. M'Vean had visited the Presbyterian Church of South Australia as a deputy.

Rev. J. W. Inglis paid a similar visit to the Presbyterian Churches of Otago, New Zealand.

Rev. Allen M'Vean, Brunswick, was nominated as Moderator of next Assembly.

The formation of an efficient Sustentation Fund scheme was found to tax the ingenuity of the members of Assembly to the utmost. Hence there were no fewer than five somewhat elaborate schemes proposed for consideration—one by Rev. J. L. Rentoul, M.A., another by Rev. M. Macdonald, a third by Rev. J. M'L. Abernethy, M.A., a fourth by Rev. S. Robinson, and a fifth by Mr. John Munro. The proposals all required the sifting discussion of the different Presbyteries.

CHAPTER XII.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 8TH NOVEMBER, 1880.

REV. A. M'VEAN, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	W. Hogg—Warracknabeal.
,,	,,	R. Scott, M.A.—Chalmers Church, Melbourne.
,,	,,	T. W. M'Gregor, M.A.—North Carlton.
,,	,,	J. Dykes—Jerilderie.
Translation	,,	W. Ross, M.A., Ph. D.—Lancefield and Romsey.
,,	,,	J. S. Chambers—Newstead and Guildford.
Ordination	,,	J. A. Taylor—Dimboola.
Demission	,,	A. M'Nicol—Moulamein.
,,	,,	J. Manby—Campbellfield and Epping.
,,	,,	C. Thomson, M.A.—Branxholme and Eumerella.
,,	,,	H. H. Finlay—Penola.

THERE were one hundred and thirty-one ministers' names on the roll. Twenty vacancies required supply of service.

There were forty-six items of business on the programme.

A number of deputies from other Churches were welcomed, and associated with the Assembly. These were—Rev. William Will and Rev. William Bannerman, from the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland; Rev. David Bruce, with Messrs. Thomas Peacock and John Anderson, from the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand; Rev. John Fleming M'Swaine and Rev. Alexander Hay, from the Presbyterian Church of Queensland; Rev. Henry Macready (Moderator), Rev. Dr. Wazir Beg, Rev. A. Gardiner, M.A., Mr. J. Pincton, from the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales; Rev. David Paton (Moderator), Rev. Messrs. James Lyall, James Faulds Henderson, Robert Mitchell, Thomas Gray, and John Hall Angus, from the Presbyterian Church of South Australia; Mr. Oscar Michelsen, missionary, from Tonga.

This large array of deputies arose from an arrangement among all the Presbyterian Churches of Australasia to hold a conference during the sittings of the Assembly in Melbourne. The object of the Conference was for the deputies to compare notes, exchange views on all matters affecting the interests of Presbyterianism in these Southern latitudes, and see if they could feel their way towards a Federation, if not a Union of all the Presbyterian Bodies.

The Conference would be independent of, and distinct from, the sittings of the Assembly, but the deliberations of the representatives would be open to all ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Churches of Australasia.

The result of all the discussions and deliberations on the Sustentation Scheme in the Assembly was the adoption of a series of regulations which should constitute the mode of operations.

1. "With the view of securing for each of the ministers an annual stipend of not less than £300, the Presbyterian Church of Victoria proposes to establish

a Central Fund, under the control of the General Assembly, and to be called the General Assembly Sustentation Fund, to which all congregations not being mission stations or Church extension charges shall contribute, and out of which the ministers of all contributing congregations shall receive an equal dividend, subject to such conditions and exceptions as shall be hereinafter specified.

2. "This fund shall be administered by a Committee of the General Assembly, on which all the Presbyteries of the Church shall be represented.

3. "To participate in the benefits of the fund, each congregation is required (*a*) to appoint a collecting agency, which shall collect, under the direction of the Board of Management, subscriptions from members and adherents, if possible quarterly, and to transmit all the contributions thus collected to the Central Fund; (*b*) to transmit to the General Assembly's Sustentation Fund a sum of not less than £75 a year, in quarterly instalments, of which sum £50 must be raised through the collecting agency, and (*c*) to satisfy the General Assembly Sustentation Fund Committee that the Board of Management is prepared to supplement the dividend from the Central Fund by a direct payment to the minister of not less than £150.

4. "While the sum of £75 is fixed as the minimum contribution to the General Assembly's Sustentation Fund, each congregation is expected to contribute according to its ability.

5. "When any congregation, admitted into connection with the fund, fails to implement these conditions, the Presbytery shall inquire into the cause, and, further, when a congregation contributes less than £75, it shall receive back only what it has contributed.

6. "No Presbytery shall proceed to the settlement of a minister until they receive a distinct promise from the Board of Management that the congregation shall join the General Assembly's Sustentation Fund, and contribute such a sum as the Presbytery and the General Assembly's Committee can approve as a fair contribution.

7. "For the endowment of the fund, donations and bequests are to be invited, which shall be invested, and only the interest applied to the increase of the annual dividend, unless the donors direct otherwise.

8. "The dividend from the fund shall be paid to ministers in quarterly instalments, the first three at the rate of £75 per annum, and the fourth increased by as much as the fund will yield.

9. "Each congregation shall transmit to the General Assembly's Sustentation Committee the whole amount raised for the fund by the collecting agency.

10. "All congregations shall send in to the Presbytery their annual balance-sheet, showing in detail their sources of income and mode of expenditure.

11. "When the dividend from the Sustentation Fund falls under £120, the interest accruing from invested funds, together with such donations as may be given for distribution during the year, shall be appropriated to the augmentation of the dividends of the congregations enumerated in a schedule to be fixed by the General Assembly."

The Widows and Orphans' Fund had increased during the year by the sum of £674 16s. 3d., making the capital equal to £21,425 18s. 4d. There were thirty widows and fifty-seven orphans annuitants.

The capital of the Infirm Ministers' Fund had reached £10,000. There were five annuitants receiving a total of £304 per annum.

The Scotch College continued to maintain its high character. During the year there had been three hundred and twenty-six pupils, with an average attendance of two hundred and ninety. The percentage due to the Church was £1,039 9s. 1d. From a statistical list laid on the table of the Assembly, the following facts would show the vast progress made by the College in number of scholars, and in the efficiency of the teaching. The comparative statement

extends over seventeen years, from 1863 to 1879 inclusive, and shows that the candidates for matriculation in the University of Melbourne rose in number from seven in 1863 to thirty-eight in 1879. "The total number of candidates during these seventeen years amounted to three hundred and twenty-nine. Out of this number who essayed the examination no fewer than three hundred passed. Still further, there were twenty-seven who passed with credit, forty-five who passed in nine subjects, eight who passed in eight subjects, one hundred and six who passed in seven subjects, sixty-nine who passed in six subjects."

In the Ladies' College, also, the year had been exceedingly prosperous. In every department there had been an increase, especially in regard to boarders. There were fifteen pupils who presented themselves for the matriculation examination at the University, and all passed both Civil Service and Matriculation. Of these, two passed with credit, they being the only ladies who gained this distinction. One of the two, who gained "well" in six subjects, took a higher place than any other candidate. The total attendance was greater by thirty than it was at any time during the second quarter of last year. For the commencement of the third term the accommodation for boarders was all taken up, and several had to be refused.

In regard to the financial affairs of the institution, with a view to the reduction of the debt to £12,000, one member of Committee liberally offered to subscribe £500 on condition that the amount necessary to effect the proposed reduction—viz., £2,500—be raised by the 31st December. Another member promised £250 on the same condition.

With regard to Ormond College a large amount of interest was concentrated on its progress in organisation. Strenuous efforts had been made in order to secure a Principal for the Theological Hall, but up to this date without effect. A vigorous onset was made on Rev. Dr. Dykes, of London, who, from his character and talents, and his Victorian experience, would have commanded universal and hearty acceptance. But he could not be persuaded, by all the influence brought to bear upon him, that it was his duty to leave his present sphere. In these circumstances, it was indispensable that the Assembly should make the best possible arrangements among their own members to carry on the operations of the Hall, and also use every effort to obtain the object of their anxious inquiry. For this purpose the Council endeavoured to enlist the able assistance of Rev. Dr. Dykes in looking out for a Principal from one or other of the Home Churches. They also endeavoured to avail themselves of his good judgment and favourable position for securing a competent head of the Ormond College of residence. Full particulars had been sent to Dr. Dykes as to the qualifications essential in a competent Head in regard to scholarship and character.

Meanwhile, as to the training of the theological students, it was resolved—

1. That the existing arrangements for the conduct of the

Theological Hall, and for instructing the students of divinity, should now cease.

2. That the following gentlemen be appointed as lecturers for the ensuing year, the appointments being for one year, and the lecturers being eligible for re-election, viz. :—

Rev. A. J. Campbell.	Rev. Murdoch Macdonald.
Rev. Dr. Mercer.	Rev. W. Henderson.
Rev. A. R. B. M'Cay, M.A.	Rev. J. L. Rentoul, M.A.
Rev. Dr. M'Donald.	Mr. Andrew Harper, M.A., B.D.

3. That the lecturers should constitute a *Senatus*, and that said *Senatus* and the Theological Hall Committee should allocate the subject of studies among the various lecturers.

4. That the Theological Hall Committee should arrange with the lecturers as to the number of lectures to be delivered by each, and recommend the remuneration to be paid to each.

The Assembly congratulated the Council and the Church generally on the completion of the College erection in a style worthy of the Church and the Colony. They recorded their appreciation of the large-hearted generosity of the friends of the College, who, mindful of the traditions of their Church and race, had contributed so liberally for the religious education and culture of the young men attending our University, and for the training of candidates for the Christian ministry. The special thanks of the Assembly were given to Mr. Ormond for his further generosity in bearing the whole cost of the tower, and for his conditional offer of £2,500 towards the Endowment Fund. The lay members of the Church were urged to subscribe £7,500, the sum required to put the Church in a position to claim Mr. Ormond's offer. Full powers were given to the Council to make all appointments necessary for opening the College of residence at the beginning of the academic year. All the financial arrangements were placed in the hands of the Council, the Theological Hall Fund being, of course, devoted to the objects for which it was raised. It was matter for deep gratitude to God that so large a measure of success should have attended the labours of the Council.

In consequence of the enlargement of the Church in Riverina, New South Wales, the Assembly were in a position to constitute the congregations of that district into a new Presbytery. It was resolved therefore to detach from their former Presbyteries the congregations of Hay, Balranald, and Moulamein, Deniliquin, Jerilderie, Urana, Wentworth, and Middle Darling, and to be formed into a separate Presbytery, to be called "The Presbytery of Murrumbidgee." The first meeting of the new Presbytery was held in Hay, on the second Wednesday in January following.

The report respecting the progress of mission work in the New Hebrides was of a favourable character. There were now three missionaries at work in the service of the Church. Mr. Holt, the lay agent, had been settled in highly favourable circumstances at Burumbah, Island of Apia. Two of the missionaries assisted him

with their own hands in the erection of his dwelling—the weather-board cottage sent from Victoria. The island was singularly rich and fertile, and supported a large population, reputed to be at once fierce and cannibal.

At Havannah Harbour, Efaté, the work was being conducted with vigour, and with gratifying success. Rev. D. Macdonald had great encouragement in a training class for teachers. He had baptised sixteen during the year, fourteen of whom were adults. The number of communicants was twenty-seven. And there were over one hundred who avowedly embraced Christianity.

The entire population of Aniwa was professedly Christian. The work was now chiefly that of instructing and building up the people in the principles and duties of Christian life. The character of the whole community was, in a marked degree, that of a Christian people. They had of their goodwill contributed £10 worth of arrow-root to the Mission Fund of the Church. One source of regret was that Rev. J. G. Paton should find it neccessary, on account of his wife's health, to retire immediately from the field, and, it was feared, without the prospect of return.

In regard to the Victorian heathen, the Chinese, who reside in large numbers at Ararat, were in urgent need of a Christian agent to labour among them. Accordingly an intelligent convert, James Ah Chue, had been engaged. He was trained at his own expense at the seminary in Fitzroy, and had resigned a good position as mining manager in order to devote himself to mission work among his countrymen.

At Beechworth a neat and commodious Chinese chapel had been erected through the efforts of a local association of Christian friends.

A catechist had been partially employed by the Kirk Session at Talbot, to whom the Committee made a small grant. He had been for some time in the Fitzroy seminary also, and was supported mainly at the expense of James Chue.

Rev. D. Vrooman was still residing at Ballaarat. He preached to a small congregation of Chinese, and had a training class for catechists, but his work had not been a success. His engagement would expire the following April.

The work among the aborigines at Ramahyuck went on as usual. The financial condition of the mission was improved, and the debt still remaining was, by a vigorous effort, removed during the sittings of the Assembly.

Rev. W. G. Fraser was appointed editor of the *Monthly Messenger*.

Opinion of counsel had been obtained on the Hastie bequest. It was as follows :—"We are of opinion that the case falls within the Thelusson Act, and that, at the expiration of twenty-one years from the death of the testator, and from thenceforth until the death of the last surviving relative named in his will, the surplus income to accrue from the *corpus* and its accretions will belong to the testator's next of kin. We are also of opinion that the bequest of the residue is not void for uncertainty."

A memorial from the congregation of Free St. John's, Sandhurst, and one from Rev. Thomas E. Ick, their minister, were presented to the Presbytery of Castlemaine, on 8th June, praying for admission into the Presbyterian Church. He had previously belonged to the Wesleyan Body. Mr. Ick held a diploma as Master of Arts in the University of Melbourne, and presented a certificate in his favour from the Chairman of the Wesleyan Melbourne district. The Assembly resolved to receive the congregation into the Church, and also Rev. T. E. Ick, M.A., into the Presbyterian Church in full standing.

Rev. J. Martin, from the Established Church of Scotland, was received into the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

Rev. A. M'Nicol was declared an *emeritus* member of the Presbytery of Castlemaine.

Rev. J. Greig, M.A., of Yackandandah, was declared an *emeritus* member of the Presbytery of Beechworth.

The Assembly, on hearing a report of Conference proceedings, recorded their deep gratitude to Almighty God for the cordial and friendly spirit of the delegates, and the success which had attended the meetings.

CONFERENCE OF DELEGATES.

1. The Conference of the delegates recommended that this Assembly send deputations to the Presbyterian Churches of Queensland and of New South Wales in May, 1882.

2. The Conference recommended that the planting of a Church in Suva, Fiji, be left in the hands of the Victorian Church.

3. The Conference recommended that the Australian Churches be invited to consider the propriety of adopting the New Hebrides Islands as a sphere of united mission operations.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR.—1881.

February.—Rev. J. Clark was welcomed by the Melbourne Presbytery after twelve months' leave of absence.

Rev. T. Edwards received a call from the congregation at Campbellfield. Having accepted, he was inducted on the 14th.

Rev. D. Fraser reported his visit to Suva, Fiji. He had selected a site for Church and manse. He had visited Levuka, held a meeting of Presbyterians, and organised a Committee, with a view to further operations. He met with a cordial reception, and had distinguished kindness showed him by W. K. Thomson, Esq., to whom the Church was indebted for the free passage of the deputy as well as for the site. Mr. Thomson's signal generosity was cordially acknowledged.

In regard to the new field opened up in the Gippsland district, it was resolved to unite Warragul, Buln Buln, and Drouin in the formation of one self-sustaining charge.

Mr. L. M. Weir, student of divinity, was licensed to preach the gospel.

March.—On the discussion which arose in the Melbourne Presby-

tery relative to the article on the Atonement in the *Victorian Review* for October, 1880, by Rev. C. Strong, the resolution which follows was adopted :—"A copy of an article by the Rev. Charles Strong in the last October number of the *Victorian Review*, on the subject of the Atonement, having been laid on the table of the Presbytery, and several members of the Court having alleged the necessity of an inquiry into the soundness of the doctrine contained in the said article, the Presbytery resolved to institute inquiry, and appointed a Committee to examine the article and report to a subsequent meeting of Presbytery."

April.—The present year became notable by several striking occurrences. One of these was that just mentioned—the Presbyterial investigation of Rev. C. Strong's soundness in the faith and its far-reaching results. Another was the decease of the Rev. Dr. Cairns. He departed this life on the Lord's Day morning of 30th January. He had just entered on his eightieth year, when he was called away without a struggle to his rest. On the very first morning after his 79th birthday anniversary, he fell asleep, not to awake till the resurrection morn. After a lengthened service in the Colonial ministry of about seven and twenty years, during which he occupied the most prominent place among the ministry of all denominations, his removal could not fail profoundly to impress the whole Christian community. Thus the question still presses—"The fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" What a blessing that, while God removes His servants, yet He carries on His work! There is herein subjoined the recorded testimony of his brethren respecting his distinguished character and work.*

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* Memorial Minute.

The Presbytery of Melbourne, in recording the removal by death of the Rev. Adam Cairns, D.D., desire to express their reverence and affection for him as a noble and genial man, an earnest Christian, and an able and faithful minister, and influential fellow-Presbyter, and their sense of obligation under which he had brought the Presbytery and the whole community by his long-continued and faithful labours in the cause of religion and Christian morality.

When he landed in the Colony in September, 1853, he at once took a prominent position as a minister of the gospel and a Presbyterian churchman. His personal character and the power of his pulpit ministrations drew around him a numerous, intelligent, and earnest congregation, and their joint influence did much to form the character of Christian society in Melbourne. Even after the infirmities of age had compelled him to resign his pastorate, up to the very day of his death he continued to take a lively and active interest in the congregation and its work.

In the Courts of the Presbyterian Church he was an acknowledged leader, and to every important movement of the Church he contributed the powerful assistance of his enthusiasm and energy, being especially helpful in all questions affecting the purity of the Church's government, discipline, worship, or doctrine. Having been appointed to the principalship of the Theological Hall, his large acquaintance with theology, his soundness of doctrine, and the kindly vehemence of his nature made him an invaluable teacher of our students for the ministry.

While taking a leading part in the affairs of the Presbyterian Church, he always showed a warm interest in the other evangelistic denominations, and

Rev. J. Cameron received a Presbyterial certificate on his leaving Victoria for New South Wales.

Messrs. M. G. Hart and S. M'Meekin, B.A., students, were recommended for admission to the Theological Hall.

Mr. L. M. Weir had received a call from the Simpson's-road congregation, and was ordained and inducted into his pastoral charge on the 26th inst.

The Committee appointed to examine the article on the Atonement by Rev. C. Strong, reported that they had carefully examined the article clause by clause, and that they had agreed to report—"I. That they had found eighteen particulars relative to the article generally which they had noted for consideration; and, II., that they had come to the four following findings:—1. The writer appears in several parts to view the doctrine of the Atonement from the standpoint of those who ignore, if they do not deny, the miraculous facts of the gospel, and the supernatural divine revelation; 2. In several parts the tendency of the article seems to be inconsistent with the infallible truth and divine authority of the scriptures; 3. The drift of the article seems to lead to the conclusion that there is no definite scriptural or catholic doctrine as to 'how God has reconciled man to Himself'; 4. The teaching of the article, taken as a whole, appears to leave out the essential element of the Atonement, viz., the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ."

Seeing the report involved matters of vital moment, it was resolved that the consideration of the report should take place at a special meeting to be held a fortnight after. When the time arrived the interest in the matter, not only among the members of the Presbytery, but in the public generally, was intense. Notice of motion meanwhile was given by the Convener of the Committee of Inquiry, the object of which was to give Rev. C. Strong an opportunity of explaining his meaning. When the meeting was held for discussing the report, every other subject being excluded, the wisdom, learning, and oratory of the members of Presbytery had ample scope and had never been so fully developed. The speeches, indeed, were masterly, the criticisms were scholarly, the learning extensive, the whole tone of the discussion was dignified and becoming a Church Court. The most powerful appeals were made to Mr. Strong to consider the extreme anxiety of the Presbytery in regard to the soundness of his teaching, and to relieve their deep perplexity by a few words of explanation. Mr. Strong, however, remained a silent witness. If he had changed his views on essential doctrine since his ordination, then honesty, candour, and all right principle demanded that he should speak out, make acknowledgment, and not

in all public matters which involved the spiritual or moral good of the community, especially signalising himself as a champion of the Sabbath, and an unflinching advocate of scriptural truth. He leaves behind him very many, not only in the Presbytery, but throughout the Colony, who feel his removal to be a personal and public loss, although his ripeness of years and the gentle mode in which he fell asleep in Jesus takes away much of the sadness of death, and renders his departure enviable rather than mournful.

presume to remain a member of an associated body in whose fundamental principles he no longer believed. And if he continued in consistent and faithful adherence to the Standards of the Church, in their plain, palpable, and universally accepted meaning, why not utter the few words necessary to set harassing doubts at rest? Silence in such a case could not be called golden.

The intense struggle of the Presbytery was to determine the happy medium in their deliverance which should maintain faithfulness to conscience and principle on the one hand, and an exercise of judicial condemnation of all heterodox teaching in the pulpit on the other, without inflicting censure for what was rather implied than proved. The proposition to call on Mr. Strong for explanations did not commend itself altogether to the acceptance of the brethren, and an elaborate effort was made by about six or seven proposals to find out a well-framed decision, which would avoid either compromise or undue severity, and would harmonise the general mind. Hence the endeavour by private consultation to concoct a resolution that would bind the whole of the proposals into one on which they could all agree. This feat was happily achieved, and it was arranged that the motion and all the amendments should be withdrawn in favour of one which would secure unanimity. The fortunate resolution was the following:—

"The Presbytery, having considered the paper on the Atonement, published in the *Victorian Review* for 1880, and signed 'Charles Strong,' and having also considered the Committee's report on the same, express their sincere concern and pain at the negative character of the teaching in Mr. Strong's paper, the absence from it of all distinct mention of the Divine person of the Lord Jesus Christ as the mediator and reconciler working out the Atonement, as well as the omission of all reference to the supernaturally given revelation, and inasmuch as the Christian faith rests upon, and the Christian consciousness takes hold of, certain objective, supernatural, historic facts, especially the incarnation, the atoning life and death, and the resurrection and ascension of our Lord, the Presbytery earnestly, and in the spirit of brotherly kindness, urge upon Mr. Strong that, in his future utterances, he make these essential facts prominent."

June.—Now the announcement falls to be made of the departure of another esteemed brother. Rev. A. D. Kininmont fell into his last sleep on 19th May. The Presbytery agreed to record their testimony concerning his life and character.*

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*Memorial Minute.

The Presbytery entertained towards him an affectionate regard as a most amiable and loving brother. They thanked God, who by His grace enabled this brother to lead a blameless life, to exercise his ministry in an important city charge for so many years with faithfulness and ability, as 'a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth;' to render important service to the Church at large by his six years' Convenership of the Home Mission Committee, at an important formation and organising stage in the history of our Church; to carry to a successful issue negotiations requiring

July.—Rev. T. Laver resigned connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

August.—Rev. J. Martin having accepted a call from the congregation at Berwick, the induction was effected on 15th inst.

Rev. J. M'Neil, B.A., minister of the Presbyterian Church of South Australia, appeared in the Presbytery, and was welcomed. Mr. M'Neil had been giving evangelistic addresses in various Presbyterian Churches in and around Melbourne, his labours had been much appreciated by many members of the Presbyterian Church, and it was hoped that his visit would be found to have been accompanied with refreshing and reviving influences from on high.

The Presbytery expressed their gratitude and pleasure in having Mr. M'Neil among them, and commended him and his work to the warm sympathy and earnest prayers of the people, while they sincerely hoped and trusted that the spirit of God would abundantly bless his addresses for the conversion of sinners, the quickening and encouragement of the true friends of Christ, and the revival and extension of the work of the Lord.

September.—A movement began among a large number of the members and adherents of Chalmers Church, East Melbourne, with a view to their being constituted a separate congregation.

October.—The friends who took part in the movement for separation amounted in number to sixty-eight, representing one hundred and forty-seven sittings, were Presbyterially formed into a congregation, and meanwhile they worshipped in the Drill-room, Victoria-parade. The Presbytery stipulated that they should not erect their new Church on a site further west than Powlett-street.

November.—A proposition was seriously entertained by the trustees of John Knox congregation to dispose of the property by sale.

December.—Rev. E. Rorke, B.A., Footscray, received a call from St. Andrew's congregation, Adelaide, which was signed by one hundred and sixty-three members and adherents. He decided to accept, and was separated from his charge.

Messrs. C. F. Howe, J. H. Marshall, B.A., J. Spalding, and W. H. Scott, students of divinity, who had finished their theological course, were licensed to preach the gospel.

The East Melbourne newly-formed congregation purchased a site on which to erect a Church at the corner of Powlett and Hotham

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wisdom, tact, and a conciliatory spirit, and so materially helping to perfect the united character of the Church, by gaining over and bringing in several outstanding ministers and congregations, a service which came with pleasing appropriateness from the pastor of Union Memorial Church; and, finally, which enabled him in 1866 to occupy, with credit to himself and gratification to the Church, the Moderator's chair of the General Assembly.

It was matter of great thankfulness that, during his last days, he maintained an eminently Christian bearing in the time of extreme exhaustion, displayed a loving, forgiving frame, showing a high appreciation of the great redemptive facts of the gospel, glorying in the cross, and evincing a vivid realisation of the presence of the Lord Jesus.

streets, and had resolved that it should be known as "The Cairns Memorial Church." They contemplated expending on the building about £10,000.

Arrangements were made for united prayer meetings during the first week of the new year.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, AT BALLAARAT, 3RD MAY, 1881.

REV. A. M'VEAN, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	George Hay—Rokewood and Cressy.
,,	,,	H. H. Finlay—Carngham and Linton.
,,	,,	J. A. Stewart—Lydiard-street Church, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	J. Manby—Meredith, Lethbridge, Morrison's, and Elaine.
,,	,,	A. Maxwell—Barrabool and Winchelsea.
,,	,,	T. Edwards—Campbellfield and Epping.
Ordination	,,	L. M. Weir—Simpson's-road Church, Collingwood.
Translation	,,	W. M. M. Alexander—Mortlake, Woorndoo, and Hexham.
Demission	,,	A. Stoker—Golden-square, Sandhurst.
,,	,,	T. M. Fraser, M.A.—Geelong.
Death	,,	Adam Cairns, D.D.—Chalmers Church.
,,	,,	D. M'Calman—Narracoorte.

There were nineteen items of business to be brought before the Commission.

A communication came from the Wesleyan Conference relative to the death of Rev. Dr. Cairns, expressive of respect to his memory and of brotherly sympathy. It was gratifying to receive this manifestation of Christian feeling.

The friends at Ballaarat, in token of thankful gratification for having the meeting of Commission in their golden city of the west, entertained all the members at luncheon.

The Commission tendered a cordial welcome to their Clerk, the Rev. Dr. Nish, on his return from the General Council, held at Philadelphia in September last, acknowledged the ability with which he represented this Church at the Council, and congratulated him on having received from the Senators of Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

The attention of the Assembly had been for some time directed to the importance of statistical information respecting the Church in its various phases. A Committee appointed for the purpose of collecting and tabulating returns from the whole Church, in answer to queries, had considerable difficulty in obtaining such full and satisfactory information as they desired. Still their labours were not altogether fruitless, and a large amount of valuable statistical information was collected.

It was found that there were one hundred and forty-seven distinct charges in the Church, to which should be added nine preaching stations, supplied by missionaries under the superintendence of Presbyteries, making altogether one hundred and fifty-six pastoral and mission centres. In many ministerial settlements there was a plurality of stations. In this aspect of the Church there were found to be now no fewer than two hundred and seventy

distinct congregations in connection with this Church, showing a progress in Church growth of no ordinary character. In every part of the Colony congregations were formed, and in localities where even a few families could be gathered together the ministers were found preaching the gospel. Pastoral charges, embracing two, three, and even four, if not five, yea and six, congregations necessarily imposed upon ministers an immense amount of travelling and toil. In supplying three congregations each Sabbath, ministers must travel in many cases twenty and thirty miles, so that, with week-day and Sabbath-day's journeying, the distances travelled were something enormous.

The number of ministers settled in charges was now greater, and the vacancies fewer, than ever before at any one time. There were one hundred and fifty-six ministers in the service of the Church. It was believed that the Presbyterian population of the Colony was about one hundred and ten thousand. Of this number about eighty-six thousand, young and old, attended Divine service in the Churches and Sabbath-schools. The number of communicants was sixteen thousand five hundred, and of elders four hundred and seventy-five. There were no fewer than three hundred and thirty Sabbath-schools, attended by about twenty-seven thousand young people, while the number of teachers was two thousand six hundred.

With regard to the revenues of the Church, in the great majority of cases the income of the congregations seemed to be well sustained. The whole of the ordinary income of the Church for the past year, including congregational purposes, Home and Heathen Missions, Widows and Orphans' Fund, Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, Sabbath-schools, and charitable purposes, was about £80,000. This amount did not include the very large contributions which had been made during the year to the Ormond College Building Fund, and to the endowment of Theological Chairs and Scholarships. The progress made in Church expansion, Church revenue, and in all the elements of Church prosperity had been truly remarkable. The increase in the number of ministers since 1866, or during a period of fifteen years, was from ninety-three to one hundred and fifty-six.

Mr. Joseph R. Anderson, M.A., a student of theology, from Queen's University, Ireland, was admitted to the Theological Hall.

The Commission agreed to send a letter of condolence to the Wesleyan Conference, on account of a sudden calamity which befel some of their ministers and members. It was to the effect that, "having heard of the great loss which had been sustained by the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australasia, through the appalling disaster of the wreck of the *Tararua*, they tendered to the brethren of that Church their deep sympathy, under the bereavement which had fallen upon them, in the sudden deaths of Rev. J. Waterhouse, Rev. J. B. Richardson, Rev. J. Armitage, and the lay representatives by whom they were accompanied in that ill-fated vessel."

It was announced that Rev. Alexander Adam, M.A., Beaufort, was nominated for the Moderatorship of the next Assembly.

Interesting and gratifying statements were made as to the efforts

put forth throughout the Church to lessen the evils of intemperance in connection with her various congregations.

The Committee on the Religious Instruction of the Young had arranged that a competition in an examination on scriptural knowledge among young men and women should take place in August.

Rev. W. Mathew applied for admission into the Church, his application being cordially recommended by the Presbytery of Wimmera. It was received with equal cordiality by the Commission, unanimously recommended to the Assembly, and by them approved.

The *Monthly Messenger* had reached a circulation of 3,000, and the Commission expressed satisfaction at the manner in which it had been conducted.

The report of the Sustentation Fund Committee was of a mixed character, being partly discouraging and partly hopeful. There were about seventy-four congregations in full relation to the fund; £1,152 15s. 3d. had been received for the first quarter, and £1,057 3s. distributed in dividends. The following sentence was in the conclusion :—"If this fund is to be lifted out of the region of doubt and difficulty, and placed on a firm basis, with a full equipment for its work in the Church, some of our laymen must take up this question of endowments, and secure for the cause a funded amount of £10,000, or £15,000."

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 14TH NOVEMBER, 1881.

REV. A. ADAM, M.A., MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	W. C. Wallace, M.A.—Branxholme and Macarthur.
,,	,,	J. Martin—Berwick and Dandenong.
Translation	,,	J. B. Steel—Narracoorte.
,,	,,	D. A. Souter—Penola.
Ordination	,,	W. L. Fenton—Bright.
Demission	,,	James Lambie—Wyndham and Little River.
,,	,,	A. Chambers, B.A.—Penshurst and Caramut.
Death	,,	A. D. Kininmont.

There were now twelve Presbyteries in the Church.

Fifty-two items of business were on the programme.

Rev. J. G. Paton, missionary, of Aniwa, and Rev. J. Russell, of Evandale, Tasmania, were associated.

Rev. Jacob Chamberlain, D.D., M.D., Missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church at Arcot, Madras, and formerly Moderator of the American Assembly of that Church, was cordially welcomed and associated.

The report respecting the state of religion and Sabbath observance was encouraging. There had been no increase of Sabbath desecration on the railways. The Government were found always willing to listen to representations affecting morality and Sabbath observance, and much had been done to suppress gambling and other forms of immorality. Excursion steamers had resumed their trips down the Bay, contributing to the desecration of the Lord's Day.

The essential doctrines of the Church had been much discussed in the Presbyteries of the Church, the brethren expressing themselves with marked ability and in a kindly spirit. Not a little hostile criticism had been excited in the press, but the result had been in favour of truth and sound doctrines. Some able articles on "The Teaching of our Standards" were published in the *Monthly Messenger.*

Evangelistic meetings had been held in many of the congregations of the Church. These were numerously attended, especially in the suburbs of Melbourne and in Ballaarat, resulting in an increase of religious interest, and in considerable addition to the membership of the Church.

The revenue of the Widows and Orphans' Fund was £22,128 4s. 7d., and of the Infirm Ministers' Fund, £12,047 12s. 3d.

In regard to Heathen Missions, there had been seven agents employed among the Chinese. Their spheres of labour were—Bright, Beechworth, Talbot, Richmond, Ballaarat, Ararat, and Deep Lead, near Stawell. At Ararat four converts were admitted into the membership of the Church by baptism.

Among the aborigines at Ramahyuck, the prayer meeting, Sabbath-school, and singing classes received careful attention. The census returns showed that the number of aborigines in the Colony had fallen off from one thousand three hundred and thirty, ten years before, to seven hundred, and during the past year there had been seven children born, but three of them died. Seven adults had also passed away. One of these was a young woman who died triumphing in Jesus Christ. One marriage was celebrated between two young people. The number at the station was eighty-one, of whom thirty-six were adults. Of the forty-five children twenty-eight were orphans. The cultivation of arrowroot and hop gardens was carried on. The station had been visited by Exhibition Commissioners from France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Japan Ceylon, &c.

In reference to the New Hebrides, Mr. Paton had been relieved from work in the Islands, in order to visit the congregations of the Church. Mr. M'Donald had baptised twenty-seven persons at his station, Havannah Harbour, and forty-seven converted natives had sat down at the Lord's table.

Mr. Holt's comfortable new cottage had been destroyed by fire, and, having suffered from fever and ague, he had returned with his family to Melbourne, abandoning the mission.

Missionary addresses of an inspiriting character were delivered by Rev. Dr. Chamberlain, Rev. J. G. Paton, and Rev. F. A. Hagenauer.

A motion was carried to the effect—"That, seeing the Assembly have earnestly recommended all ministers and congregations to do their utmost to discourage the vice of gambling so widely prevalent in this community, it be further enjoined with this view that all lotteries, raffles, art unions, and kindred methods of raising money for Church purposes be discountenanced, and, as far as possible, suppressed."

On the subject of temperance, the Assembly recommended to

ministers, ruling elders, and people to put forth renewed and more earnest efforts in arresting the progress of the evil of intemperance, and especially urge them to lend their support to the attempt being made to place on the Statute-book of Victoria a measure similar to that approved of by the Imperial Parliament, and known as the Local Option Act.

In connection with Home Mission work there had been effected during the year sixteen settlements of ministers. There were fifteen fields in which lay missionaries were employed. In addition to these there were three-and-twenty vacancies at the beginning of the year which required supply, and other ten vacancies had occurred during the course of the year. It was found that there was not now the same amount of restlessness which characterised so many of the congregations and ministers in the earlier years of the Church's history. It was anticipated that there would not in the future be so many vacancies—at least resignations—as there had been in the past. The Church was now better supplied with a settled ministry than ever it had been before.

A case of gross misrepresentation of the teaching of the Standards of the Church had been made, and caused no small sensation throughout the whole denomination. The public Press, in reporting the proceedings of a meeting of the Scots Church congregation, represented an elder of the Church having held up the Confession of Faith to scorn, and as denouncing its teaching on various important points. The language attributed to him on the occasion respecting the doctrines assailed was exceedingly strong, and, coming from an office-bearer of the Church, and from a gentleman of a high professional character, it was calculated to excite the anxious attention of the whole Church. The offensive speech was reported in the following terms :—"That in the Confession of Faith he found it stated that the world and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, were created in the space of six days of twenty-four hours each ; that, in order to satisfy the justice of God, millions on millions of God's people had been sent to perdition, simply because they never knew of Christ ; that there are elect and non-elect, and that the elect will be saved whether they like it or not, and that the non-elect, do what they can, cannot be saved ; that there is such a thing as the eternal damnation of infants who had never lisped a name ; and, further, that the men who pretend to assert, maintain, and defend all the doctrines contained in the Confession are dishonest men."

Language of so sweeping a character demanded the attention of the Church Courts. Accordingly, a considerable number of the Presbyteries were roused into instant action, condemning the assault on the Standards of the Church as gross, unwarranted, and unjust. At the same time it was considered by some that it might be expedient to move the Assembly to have an authoritative declaration made of the proper interpretation of those portions of the Standards which have been so grievously misrepresented. Meanwhile it appeared from the records of the Presbytery of Melbourne that the

offender had been dealt with in regard to the obnoxious statements, and that there had been received and accepted from him an assurance that it was not his intention to impute dishonesty to the office-bearers of this Church in their subscriptions to these Standards, and that he had withdrawn any expressions which might seem to bear that meaning.

The Assembly, after full deliberation, by an overwhelming majority, agreed to declare—

1. "That the statements referred to in the overtures are most unwarrantable and inaccurate, and involve a gross misrepresentation of the doctrine of the Confession.

2. "That for an elder to make serious charges against the teaching of the Confessional Standards of this Church, in presence of the congregation, over which he has been appointed to rule, is in the highest degree inconsistent with the engagement, under which every office-bearer comes, to assert, maintain, and defend the whole doctrine contained in the Standards, and deserves grave censure.

"But, inasmuch as there may be ground for the presumption that the offender did not realise the gravity of the position he assumed, nor intend to go so far as he actually did in assailing the Confession; and as he subsequently modified the offensiveness of the language in which he expressed his criticisms, and also disclaimed all intention of imputing dishonesty to the office-bearers of the Church in subscribing the Confession, the Assembly, while acknowledging the diligence of the Presbytery of Melbourne, thought it expedient to appoint a Committee to confer with him on his return to the Colony, in the hope that he may be induced to withdraw unconditionally the statements complained of, and express deep regret for having uttered them.

"In regard to the question of modifying the Standards, preparing a compendium of them, revising them, or simply authorising a declaratory expression of the meaning attached to difficult and disputed passages, there was full deliberation. The resolution adopted was—'That the General Assembly appoint a Committee to draw up a Declaratory Act setting forth the sense in which the Church understands the statements in the Confession of Faith respecting the Divine decrees, the salvation of children dying in infancy, the dealing of God with the heathen, and the creation of the world in six days, and requires them to be received, as also the sense in which the Church regards the formula as having binding force; and report to the Commission, in order that said Act might be submitted to Presbyteries, and be dealt with at next Assembly.'"

The Ormond College moved on, undergoing an admirable process of evolution. The great and important task imposed on the Council had been accomplished. The building had been erected, and furnished for the reception of students. Lecture rooms had been provided, and a fair number of scholarships had been raised, in connection both with the Theological Hall and with the University. The Council had been fortunate in securing the services of a master for

the College of residence. They had seen the College in its first year of existence almost full of students, and a proposal for further extension of the buildings was under consideration. It was matter of extreme satisfaction—thanks to Mr. Ormond—not only that there was no debt on the College, but that there was the handsome balance of £6,413 15s. 9d. to their credit in the bank.

The Council had imposed on Rev. J. O. Dykes, D.D., London, the serious responsibility of selecting a master for the College, having perfect confidence in his judgment. Dr. Dykes took the matter in hand, and, with the personal presence and counsel of Mr. Ormond, he offered the appointment to Mr. John Henry MacFarland, M.A., of Queen's College, Belfast, and St. John's College, Cambridge.

Mr. MacFarland reached the Colony on the 22nd February, and entered on his duties immediately on his arrival.

The College was formally opened by His Excellency the Governor on the 18th March. The Moderator of the Assembly, the Moderator of the Presbytery of Melbourne, and the Chairman of the Theological Hall *Senatus* conducted devotional exercises; then the Governor declared the College open.

A strenuous endeavour was made to raise as many scholarships as possible to signalise the opening of the College. A circular was issued asking ten, and, within a few days, they had the gratification of receiving twelve.

Mr. William Russell gave £1,000 to found a scholarship bearing his name, open for competition by students attending the University who purposed studying for the ministry.

Mr. William Cumming gave £1,000 to found a scholarship bearing his name, tenable at College, open to all native-born Australians, and free from any denominational restrictions.

Six scholarships of £50 a year each, for three years only, were presented by the following gentlemen :—

Mr. William Taylor, Overnewton ; Mr. Alex. Wilson, Mr. James MacBain, Mr. Chas. Officer, Mr. J. L. Currie, Mr. Jas. Balfour

Four scholarships of £25 a year each had been received from the following :—

Mr. John Cumming, Mr. Moore, Mr. Andrew Harper, M.A., Mr. William Lewis.

In the order of the names of these twelve benefactors, the following are the names of the twelve successful competitors :—

Messrs. S. M'Meekin, B.A.; A. E. Barrowclough ; J. W. M'Cay ; A. D. Gillespie ; J. H. Meek ; J. H. Y. Nish ; H. J. Robertson, B.A. ; J. G. Davies, B.A. ; C. F. Howe ; T. W. A. Royce ; Colin Robertson ; D. A. M'Dougall.

During the year thirty students were enrolled. Of these, eight were in attendance on the lectures in the Theological Hall ; the remainder were University students, pursuing the Arts, Law, Medical, or Engineering courses.

In respect to finances, Mr. Ormond, in a message from Home, offered to bear the whole expense of the building, and thereby allow the other subscriptions to be applied to other objects connected

with the College, such as endowments and scholarships. Hence Mr. Ormond had paid into the College account the princely sum of £22,571, which is even more than the whole cost of the building. By this fresh act of munificence Mr. Ormond had laid the Church, and even the whole community, under a heavy debt of obligation.

The following is a summary of the subscriptions to date:—

Mr. Ormond's subscription						£22,571	0	0
4	subscriptions of				£1,000	4,000	0	0
11	,,				500	5,500	0	0
1	,,				350	350	0	0
1	,,				300	300	0	0
1	,,				250	250	0	0
4	,,				200	800	0	0
22	,,				100	2,200	0	0
1	,,				52 10s.	52	10	0
10	,,				50	500	0	0
7	,,	in smaller sums				72	2	0
						£36,595	12	0
4 scholarships of £25 each for three years					300			
6 scholarships of £50 each for three years					900			
						1,200	0	0
						£37,795	12	0

For detailed list see appendix (G).

The work of the Theological Hall was conducted by seven lecturers. The following were the arrangements:—

I. Systematic Theology—Rev. A. J. Campbell and Rev. M. Macdonald.

II. Church History and Doctrine of the Church—Rev. A. R. Boyd M'Cay, M.A., and Rev. Dr. Macdonald.

III. Apologetics—Rev. J. L. Rentoul, M.A.

IV. Sacred Languages and Exegetical Theology—Rev. Dr. Mercer and Mr. A. Harper, M.A., B.D.

V. Moral Philosophy—Rev. A. R. B. M'Cay, M.A.

Eight scholarships were awarded during the year, varying from £25 to £60 each.

The theological students were liberally dealt with by the master of the College.

The object now in view was to have appointed, as soon as possible, two permanent professors, and the Endowment Fund raised to £30,000 for the support of the chairs.

The Religious Instruction Committee were enjoined to bring before the Royal Commission the views of this Church on having the Bible read, with non-denominational explanations by the teachers, during ordinary school hours. The Assembly would also respectfully direct the attention of the Royal Commission to the Canadian system.

Rev. J. Lambie was constituted a minister *emeritus*.

In regard to the Allan bequest, it was resolved to recommend the adoption of a two-years course of religious instruction, founded on the Shorter Catechism, according to the will of the late Robert Allan.

It was agreed to appoint a large number of deputies to attend the conference in Sydney on federation, to be held in April next.

The General Assembly having heard Rev. J. G. Paton's explanations in regard to Mr. P. Holt's published charges against the mission work in the New Hebrides, and the evidence presented, expressed their unanimous conviction that Mr. Holt's charges are utterly without foundation, and affirmed their unlimited confidence in the missionaries and their families.

Events of the Year.—1882.

February.—The congregation of Napier-street, Fitzroy, was constituted a collegiate charge, Rev. R. Hamilton, the minister, approving.

March.—Rev. C. Strong went on a visit to the Home country on a six months' leave of absence.

The Toorak congregation had agreed to co-operate in organising and sustaining a mission in the district of Prahran, and the Rev. W. S. Rolland had been appointed missionary.

June.—The new East Melbourne congregation, to be known as the Cairns Memorial Church, have resolved on building at the corner of Powlett and Hotham streets.

A special meeting of the Melbourne Presbytery was held for religious conference, and was adjourned with a view to a second meeting in July.

July.—A new congregation, irregularly formed, and worshipping in Cecil-street, Emerald Hill, was received into Union with the Church on condition that they take steps as early as possible to hold their Sabbath services in the locality of Albert Park. Rev. A. F. Knox, who was instrumental in forming the congregation, sought re-admission into the Church since his return from Adelaide, acknowledging the irregularity of his action. Although he was admitted he did not remain permanently attached.

August.—Rev. J. G. Paton's name was added to the roll of the Melbourne Presbytery by the authority of the Commission of Assembly.

Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, U.S.A., the distinguished Christian philosopher, was introduced to the Melbourne Presbytery. He was cordially welcomed, and gave a very able address.

A considerable amount of interest was taken about this time by the Presbyterians in Melbourne in holding repeated religious conferences with a view to the reviving of God's work among the congregations, and spreading the influence of vital Christianity.

September.—The announcement was made of the lamented decease of Rev. J. G. Stobbs, M.A., minister of the West Melbourne congregation.* His name was taken from the roll of the living. The minute adopted by the Presbytery regarding him is subjoined.

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* Memorial Minute.

* Gifted as he was with keen intellectual powers which fitted him for grappling with the difficult problems which in these days perplexed the minds

A call issued from Seymour, Avenel, and Nagambie in favour of Rev. Hugh Macfarlane, of Bacchus Marsh and Melton. The call was accepted, and he was relieved of his charge on the 19th.

October.—The mission work in Prahran had progressed so as to assume the aspect of Church extension. The people proposed to build in the adjoining district of Hawksburn.

A mission cause had been started in Parkville, and another in Armadale.

A Hospitality Committee was formed in Melbourne for the purpose of providing suitable accommodation and entertainment for the various representatives of Presbyterian Churches from the sister Colonies, who were expected to be present the following month with a view to conference on the subject of Federation.

Rev. D. Macdonald, missionary from the New Hebrides, arrived on furlough.

December.—A movement was made in Williamstown on the part of one hundred and thirty-eight Presbyterians, with a view to the formation of a second congregation. Its organisation in North Williamstown was decided upon. Messrs. Alexander Stewart, M.A., James Gibb, and J. Macdermid were licensed by the Melbourne Presbytery to preach the gospel.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 2nd May, 1882.

Rev. A. Adam, Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	Robert Angus—Maldon and Baringhup.
,,	,,	James Groundwater—Balranald and Moulamein.
Ordination	,,	R. W. Rock—Woodford.
Demission	,,	James Smeaton—Maryborough.
,,	,,	A. Simpson—Shelford and Inverleigh.
,,	,,	W. A. Lind—Moorabool.
,,	,,	John Urquhart—Edenhope.
,,	,,	W. A. Baker—Seymour and Mangalore.
Death	,,	James Paton—Horsham.

Rev. D. Shearer, Presbyterian minister from Western Australia, was welcomed. He addressed the Commission on the condition and prospects of the Church in Western Australia. The Commission cordially united in assuring him of their sympathy in his present isolated position, and their confident hope that at no distant period the Church in Western Australia should be incorporated with the General Assembly of Australia.

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of many inquiring young men, and having a deep sympathy with the aspirations of youth, he occupied a position peculiarly his own, and exercised influence over a large number beyond the bounds of his own congregation. Whilst the members of Presbytery feel that the removal of one of their number, after so short a ministry, is a solemn call to them to be more zealous in the Lord's work while the day of health and work lasts, they desire to assure the mourning widow of their deepest sympathy for her in her sad bereavement, and prayerfully commend her to the merciful care of God our Father in Heaven."

The report on the Declaratory Act was brought up, and it was agreed to have the draft discussed during the present meeting. After lengthened deliberation, it was resolved to remit the draft to Presbyteries, to be reported on to next Assembly. The following is a copy of what was ultimately adopted :—

"Whereas questions have been raised as to the meaning of certain statements in the Confession of Faith, relative to the divine decrees, the salvation of children dying in infancy, the dealing of God with persons beyond the operation of the ordinary means of grace, and the creation of the world in six days ; but, also, as to the meaning and binding force of certain statements in the Formula, by which the ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria profess adherence to the Standards of the Church, and whereas it is desirable, in order to remove such doubts, authoritatively to declare the sense in which the Church understands these statements, the General Assembly resolves to declare, and does hereby declare :—

1. "That the doctrines of God's eternal decree, including the doctrine of election to eternal life, is held as defined in the Confession of Faith, chap. iii., section 1, where it is expressly stated that, according to this doctrine, 'neither is God the Author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creature, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established;' and, further, that the said doctrine is held in connection and harmony with the truth, that God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, that He has provided a salvation sufficient for all, adapted to all, and offered to all in the gospel, and that every hearer of the gospel is responsible for his dealing with the free and unrestricted offer of eternal life.

2. "That while none are saved except through the mediation of Christ, and by the grace of the Holy Spirit, who worketh where and when and how it pleases Him ; while the duty of sending the gospel to the heathen who are sunk in ignorance, sin, and misery is imperative, and while the outward and ordinary means of salvation for those capable of being called by the Word are the ordinances of the gospel, in accepting the Standards it is not required to be held that any who die in infancy are lost, or that God may not extend His grace to any who are without the pale of ordinary means, as it may seem good in His sight.

3. "That, in accordance with the practice hitherto observed in this Church, liberty of opinion is allowed on such points in the Standards as are not essential to the system of doctrine therein taught, as the interpretation of the 'six days' in the Mosaic account of creation, the Church guarding against the abuse of this liberty to the injury of its unity and peace.

4. "That the Church does not regard subscription to the Formula as binding the person subscribing to anything more in respect of doctrine than the Formula requires expressly and in terms, viz. :— To own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Standards of this Church as an exhibition of the sense in which he understands the Scriptures, and to acknowledge it as a confession of his faith,

meaning, by the 'whole doctrine contained in the Standards,' the system of doctrine in its unity, formulated in the Confession of Faith, catechetically exhibited in the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, implied in the statements of the Directory for Public Worship, the Form of Presbyterian Church Government, and the Second Book of Discipline, and historically known as the Calvinistic or Reformed System of Doctrine ; but that the Church has always regarded, and continues to regard, those whom it admits to the office of the ministry as pledged to profess, defend, and teach this system in its integrity, and, while giving due prominence in their teaching to all the doctrines which it includes, to give a chief place to the central and most vital doctrines thereof, with those objective supernatural facts on which they rest, especially the Incarnation, the Perfect Obedience and Expiatory Death, and the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord, avoiding such forms of teaching as might be fitted to weaken or destroy the faith of the people in the same."

Rev. Peter Mercer, D.D., was nominated for the Moderator's chair next Assembly.

In consequence of certain changes which the Formula of Subscripton by the office-bearers of the Church had undergone since the first General Assembly in 1859, the question was started how far these changes might affect the tenure of Church property. A change had been effected in 1862, another substantially the same was adopted in 1868, while in 1877 a Formula of Subscription was published by Assembly authority, which differed still more widely from the Standard. The question was one for the law advisers of the Church to answer. After consideration their reply was :—"That no change can, in their opinion, be legally made on the Formula recited in the Act of Union, without endangering the security of our Church properties, except through a new Act of Parliament," and the Committee had agreed to recommend that they should be empowered by the Commission to take the initiatory steps for obtaining such an Act, if they should find it expedient to take action thereon previous to next Assembly ; but that, in the event of such an opportunity occurring, a *pro re nata* meeting of Assembly should be convened to consider the proposed change in the Act.

No meeting however of the kind required to be called.

CHAPTER XIII.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 13TH NOVEMBER, 1882.
REV. PETER MERCER, D.D., MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	C. Thomson, M.A.—Burrumbeet and Windermere.
,,	,,	A. Stoker—Carisbrook, Majorca, and Craigie.
,,	,,	J. U. Taylor—Rochester and Corop.
,,	,,	A. S. Houston—Batesford and Russell's Bridge.
,,	,,	A. Chambers, B.A.—Tatura.
,,	,,	J. Urquhart—Numurkah.
Translation	,,	H. Macfarlane—Seymour, Nagambie, &c.
Ordination	,,	J. R. Anderson, M.A.—Penshurst and Caramut.
,,	,,	J. H. Marshall, B.A.—Wickliffe and Glen Thompson.
,,	,,	W. H. Scott—Allansford.
,,	,,	W. Gray—Avoca and Bung Bong.
,,	,,	A. C. Smith, jun., M.A.—Horsham.
,,	,,	M. Riordan, colleague—Sale.
Demission	,,	T. B. Swift—Murchison and Dargalong.
,,	,,	A. Murdoch—Benalla.
,,	,,	W. C. Macdonald, M.A.—St. John's, Sandhurst.
Death	,,	J. G. Stobbs, M.A.—West Melbourne.

The whole subject of the Formula was thoroughly discussed, and the Law Committee were instructed to prepare a digest of all the action of the Church in regard to the Formula, and report to the Commission.

The subject of the Declaratory Act was discussed with great deliberation, and under intense interest. The resolution which was adopted was—"That the Assembly approve of the Declaratory Act as explanatory of the mind of the Church, with respect to the statements in the Confession of Faith to which it refers, and the meaning and binding force of the Formula; but agree to defer its formal adoption in the meantime, in order to afford an opportunity of considering whether any change of form may be required to adapt it to the purposes of the proposed Union of the Churches of the Australian Colonies."

Mr. Alexander Stewart, M.A., and Mr. James Gibb, students of theology, received authority to submit themselves to the exercises necessary with a view to license by the Presbytery of Melbourne.

The following is a comparative statement of the Widows and Orphans' Fund, on 30th September, in each of the preceding five years :—

Year.	No. of Ratepayers.	Annuitants.		Revenue.			Expenditure.			Capital of the Fund.		
		Widows.	Orphans.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1878	144	29	51	2,843	9	9	1,692	18	4	20,217	14	6
1879	146	31	58	2,511	1	9	1,977	14	2	20,751	2	1
1880	151	30	57	2,702	12	10	2,032	16	7	21,425	18	4
1881	151	33	59	2,774	12	5	2,072	6	2	22,128	4	7
1882	151	32	54	2,655	2	0	2,071	0	8	22,712	5	11

The revenue of the Infirm Ministers' Fund was £12,835 13s. The annuities and expenses amounted to £510 12s. 2d. There were eight annuitants on the fund.

The capital had accumulated since 1865 as follows :—Collections, £1,600 ; donations, £4,000 ; interest, £2,000 ; rates of ministers, £4,000. There were 160 ministers who had joined the fund.

Returns on the remit, relative to the Infirm Ministers' Fund, were submitted to the Assembly, and the following were declared to be the permanent rules for the management of the fund :—

1. "No minister is admitted as a beneficiary on the fund until he shall have served in some charge in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria for at least five years, and shall have paid annual contributions of £5 for these five years, or £20 in one sum during the first year."

2. "Presbyteries are instructed to require of ministers, on their accepting a call, that they connect themselves with this fund by paying an annual contribution of £5 for five years, or £20 in one sum, with the exception of ministers who at the time of their ordination or induction are in infirm health, or are upwards of forty-five years of age. Such ministers shall not be required or permitted to connect themselves with the fund, unless by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Committee, and on such special conditions as may be considered equitable to the interests of the fund."

The proposal to fix an additional annual rate, through the payment of which ministers might obtain an additional allowance of £50 per annum, was approved, and it was remitted to the Committee to consider and report to next Assembly on the amount of the rate, and the terms for the payment of it, which would be required for the providing of such an annuity without detriment to the interests of the fund.

The Rev. J. Hay requested authority to form an association for the promotion of the interests of the fund, and the authority was cordially granted.

The Rev. D. Macdonald, missionary from Efaté, and Rev. A. B. Connel, of Lochee, Scotland, on a visit, were welcomed and associated.

On the subject of Sabbath observance and the state of religion, Presbyteries were recommended to continue their conferences, to bring their influence to bear on their congregations for the promotion of vital godliness, and to use every effort to preserve the sanctity of the Sabbath, and to suppress the vice of gambling in the community. One of the chief features in the report was a correspondence which had been opened up between Rev. G. D. Buchanan, of Baltimore, U.S.A., whose attention had been drawn to Victoria as a field of evangelistic labour. The Committee had a desire to employ one or two Evangelists, who should be detached from any charge, and, in harmony with the Presbyteries and the Home Mission Committee, should labour throughout the Colony in spreading a healthful and evangelical Christianity. Rev. John M'Neil, from South Australia, had been conducting evangelistic services in many of the great centres of population, and had been the means of

quickening into spiritual life many who were cold and formal. It appeared, therefore, as if the Great Head of the Church were leading another evangelistic worker to cast his lot amongst us. There was ample testimony as to Mr. Buchanan's character, ability, and piety, and the success which had attended his ministry as a pastor in a city charge. The Committee would not pledge themselves to provide for his support exclusively as an evangelist, but would leave him when he arrived to be guided by circumstances as to what course he should pursue.

Mrs. Col. Robertson had handed over to the Church the forty-seven acres of land at Peterborough, which had been promised some years before.

The operations of the Home Mission Committee had still extended over a wide field, embracing all the Presbyteries of the Church. There were thirty vacant charges and twenty-three mission stations which required to be provided for. With the view of overtaking this great work, they had forty-four agents employed. Of these fourteen were ordained ministers, thirteen were probationers, nine were lay missionaries, and eight were student evangelists. In the whole service of the Church at this date there were—ministers in charges, one hundred and forty ; ordained preachers, six; licentiates, six ; and lay missionaries, exclusive of students, nine ; making altogether one hundred and sixty-one labourers. There had been two deaths in the course of the year, eight resignations, and two translations. Ten accessions had been made to the preaching staff, and one advanced student had joined the Hall. There had been eight inductions, seven ordinations, and one translation. Almost all the students at the Hall were doing good service in spreading the gospel. They had established among them a missionary society, for the purpose of cultivating among themselves an interest in both Home and Foreign mission work, and also raising a fund for assisting the missions of the Church.

The deputies to Queensland expressed their gratification at the energy, activity, and progress of the Church in that Colony ; at the cordial welcome given to them by the brethren of that Church, and their earnest desire for a speedy fraternal Union of all the Presbyterian Churches throughout the Continent.

The Assembly was addressed by Rev. J. M. Ross, the general Agent of the Church of New South Wales, who set forth with much clearness and power the remarkable progress which had of late years been made by the Church in the sister Colony, and gave also a deeply interesting exposition of their Sustentation Scheme.

The report of a Committee appointed at the Conference held in Sydney, in April last, to frame a scheme for the Union of all the Presbyterian Churches in Australia, and to prepare a general code of rules for the guidance of the United Churches, was submitted by Dr. Nish as their Convener.

A fundamental principle of the proposed Union of the various Presbyterian Churches in Australia was to maintain the present autonomy of the Churches in each of the different colonies as far as

possible. It was suggested at this initiatory stage "that meanwhile the various Courts of the Church in each Colony should be—Sessions, Presbyteries, Assemblies, and the General Assembly, each Colony having its own Assembly. It was proposed that each Assembly should for the present have the supreme control of its own Church property, and its decision should also be final in all cases of discipline, except in reference to unsound doctrine. Each Assembly should also for the present have the full control of its various funds, but those who have the management of these funds should report annually to the General Assembly on their progress and prospects."

"Objects to be kept in view should be, to have the Theological Halls in Sydney and Melbourne duly equipped, and a uniform standard of theological training for the ministers of the Church established."

"It might be expected largely to conduce to the dignity and *prestige* of the General Assembly, should its whole time be devoted to the consideration of the most effective mode of conducting our Home Mission work throughout the continent, as well as our missionary operations among the heathen, whether abroad or within our borders, and to the proper management of our Theological Halls and the efficient training of our future ministers."

These are a few of the germs from which the Union or Federation of the Australian Churches might be expected to spring. "In the meantime the important object in view must be commended to the Presbyteries, Sessions, and people of the entire Australian Church, to offer united and earnest pleadings at the Throne of Grace for the success of Union efforts."

It was resolved "that another conference should be held in Melbourne in the month of June, 1883, when the opinions and views of all the Australian Churches should be brought out and discussed; that deputies should be appointed to visit the Churches in New South Wales, Tasmania, and South Australia during the sittings of their Supreme Courts, in March and April, with the view of conveying the assurance of fraternal interest and sympathy, and our desire to be knit to them more closely in the bond of active union and co-operation."

The Assembly was addressed by the Rev. James Cosh, M.A., Moderator of the General Assembly of New South Wales; Rev. J. S. Laing, Clerk of the New South Wales Assembly; and Rev. James Cameron, Convener of their Church Extension Committee.

The Religious Instruction and Sabbath-school Committees had during the year the work on hand of carrying on the Higher Christian Education Scheme. The interest in this scheme had greatly increased, hence the candidates for examination and the essayists were about three times as many as before. Those examined on the Shorter Catechism were, however, included, this being a department which was added by the last General Assembly. Competitions had been held on the 29th and 30th September. Essays, too, had been sent in and examined, and it was highly gratifying to see that

in so many different places the young people, who form the great hope of our congregations, should have been so stimulated and aided in their Biblical studies.

The report on Heathen Missions this year spoke cheeringly as to the funds. There had been an increase in the revenue of the previous year in regard to the missions collectively, to the extent of close on £700. The New Hebrides Mission and the *Dayspring* Maintenance Funds benefited by about £600, while the Chinese and Aborigines were favoured by an addition of about £126. The cause of the increase was, doubtless, owing to the earnest pleadings of Rev. J. G. Paton in making the tour of the Colony, and to the liberal response of the congregations to his fervent appeals.

There was now no superintendent of the Chinese Mission. No new agent could be found. It was resolved, as the best that could be done, to remove James Chue from Ararat, where he had laboured with such marked success in the mission, to Ballaarat, and that Paul Yung should be transferred from Deep Lead to Ararat. The attendance at the Chapel, Ballaarat, had greatly improved.

There was the fear that Rev. J. G. Paton, on account of his wife's health, would not be able again to resume work on the islands. It would be necessary to have another missionary appointed in his place by the Church.

A petition was forwarded by the Committee to the Queen, praying that British protection and justice might be permanently established over the New Hebrides Islands, and that if practicable the group might be annexed to the British Crown.

The thanks of the Assembly were given to the Commissioners of Railways for the use of carriages to Lilydale, to the contractors for the railways, and to the owner of the steamer *Williams* for a marine excursion, all these favours having been granted to the Hospitality Committee free of charge, to assist them in entertaining the deputies from the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales.

The past year of the Scotch College had been exceptionally successful. The present attendance was 300. The percentage payable to the Church amounted to £1,128 11s. 9d., the largest sum for several years. The results scored by the College students at the Melbourne and Home Universities had never been more satisfactory. Thirty-four boys from the College had passed matriculation ; the largest number that ever passed from any school in the Colony at one examination.

The College suffered a heavy loss during the past year through the deaths of Mr. J. Matheson and of the Hon. Robert Ramsay.

The attendance of day pupils at the Ladies' College had been greater than ever before. The house had been full from the beginning of the year. There had been unusual success in passing the Matriculation Examination. Notwithstanding new and stringent conditions, a large percentage of the honours conferred fell to pupils of the College.

During the year the College had lost by death one of its most efficient teachers.

The religious instruction had been vigorously carried on. Two hours every week were devoted to it in the lower classes, and one in the upper. The Sabbath afternoon class was also maintained.

It had been a matter for consideration whether it would be advisable to sell the present Assembly Hall, and turn the sale to good account by the enhanced value of the land. A special Committee had reported on the subject, and the Assembly resolved as follows :—

1. "That this Hall be retained as our Assembly Hall.

2. "That the Assembly authorise the sale of John Knox Church, on the understanding that any surplus derived from this sale, after clearing off the debt on the Church, be applied to the Assembly Hall Fund.

3. "That the Committee be instructed to take immediate steps for having this Hall placed in a state of proper repair.

4. "That the Committee be further instructed to consider and report to the Commission on the best mode of utilising the site and the Hall, so as to derive from them a revenue which will meet current expenses, and provide for the gradual reduction of the debt."

In reference to the Theological Hall, satisfactory reports had been furnished by the lecturers. These were Rev. A. J. Campbell, Rev. A. R. Boyd M'Cay, M.A., Rev. Peter Mercer, D.D., Rev. M. Macdonald, Rev. D. Macdonald, D.D., Rev. Alex. Yule, M.A., Mr. A. Harper, M.A., B.D., Rev. James Nish, D.D., Rev. T. E. Ick, M.A.

The Assembly offered their congratulations to the students licensed last year, who are now engaged in settled ministerial duty, and rejoice in the accession of five additional labourers for the present year. They heard with sincere pleasure of the formation in the Hall of a Student's Home and Foreign Missionary Society. The Assembly, considering that the Hall had been in existence for eighteen years, and had been conducted under provisional arrangements, determined to proceed with all expedition to the appointment of a Principal and Primarius Professor of Theology, and with that view nominated the following gentlemen in Great Britain a Commission to select a suitable man, viz. :—Rev. Dr. Dykes, Rev. Dr. Porter, Rev. Dr. Flint, Rev. Dr. Rainy, and Rev. Dr. Cairns ; Dr. Cairns, Convener.

In connection with this, and in regard to the appointment of two permanent Professors, the Assembly instructed the Theological Committee, in conjunction with the Council of Ormond College, to raise a salary for a second Professor, either by an endowment or by subscriptions guaranteed for five years, and further instructed the Convener of the Theological Hall Committee, so soon as an adequate amount had been raised, to intimate it to the various Presbytery Clerks, so that the Presbyteries may forward their nominations to the next General Assembly. Moreover, the Commission at Home were instructed to report within six months whether they had succeeded or not in securing the services of a Principal, and in the

event of their not having succeeded, the Presbyteries should be instructed to nominate two Professors, to be elected at next General Assembly.

With regard to the Ormond College, there was little to report beyond the fact that it had been in full working order throughout the year, and that it had realised the principle objects which the Church had in view in its foundation. Thirty-two students had their names enrolled in the books of the College. Of these, seven were attending the lectures in connection with the Theological Hall. During the two years the students had been at work, nine of them had either entered on, or completed, the Arts course at the University. There was great satisfaction with the manner in which the Master had conducted its affairs during the past, and as the engagement with him extended only for three years, it was necessary that a new arrangement should be made. It was also resolved, in accordance with Mr. Ormond's extraordinary liberality, to have the College buildings extended, and the accommodation for students enlarged.

Under the proceedings of the Board of Examination, it was resolved that Messrs. A. C. M'Connan, James Gibb, A. Stewart, M.A., D. A. M'Dougall, W. Macdermid, and D. Milne should be taken on trial for license by their respective Presbyteries.

Events of the Year.—1883.

February.—A call issued from the congregation, Footscray, in favour of Mr. James Gibb. He accepted, and the ordination was effected on 5th March.

The call from Cecil-street congregation, Emerald Hill, came out in favour of the Rev. A. F. Knox, which, after consideration, he declined.

Steps were taken in order to the formation of a congregation in the suburban districts of Newmarket and Kensington.

A call was given by the Bacchus Marsh congregation to the Rev. J. M. Innes, Moruya, N.S.W., Presbytery of Monaro. In due time it was accepted, and the induction was carried into effect on 18th April.

An important resolution was adopted by the Melbourne Presbytery in regard to Sabbath observance. "The Presbytery have had their attention drawn to the recent attack upon the Divine authority of the Christian Sabbath, and to the proposals to open Public Libraries and Museums on the Lord's Day, and recognising the duty of the Church to use vigilance in meeting error with truth, direct the ministers of the Presbytery to seek and employ faithfully all opportunities of inculcating scriptural views of the Divine authority and proper observance of the Sabbath, as these are set forth in the Standards of the Church."

March.—A communication had arrived from Suva, Fiji, intimating that an effort was being made for the erection of a Presbyterian Church there, and craving help from Presbyterians in

Victoria. A Committee was formed in order to raise funds for their assistance.

Dr. Gunn, a medical missionary, on his way from Scotland to Futuna, with his wife, received a cordial welcome from the Melbourne Presbytery.

The Napier-street collegiate congregation, Fitzroy, brought out a call signed by seventy-five members and forty-five adherents in favour of Rev. T. E. Ick, M.A., Sandhurst. When presented, he declined acceptance.

April.—Rev. G. D. Buchanan, formerly minister of Baltimore, U.S.A., had arrived, and had been received into the ministry of the Church.

May.—A call emanated from Napier-street collegiate charge, signed by one hundred and forty-five members and adherents in favour of the Rev. G. D. Buchanan. This invitation, after a month's consideration, was declined.

It was proposed to commence a Mission station and Sabbath-school at Camberwell, and also to hold initiatory services with a view to the formation of a cause at Newmarket.

It had been agreed to erect a building, to be used for public worship, at the corner of Cromwell-road and Angelo-street, Prahran, afterwards designated Hawksburn Presbyterian Church.

June.—Rev. R. Hamilton tendered the resignation of his charge, on the ground of advancing years and infirmities.

A call issued from Cairns Memorial congregation, signed by one hundred and twenty-seven members and adherents, on behalf of Rev. G. D. Buchanan. This call was accepted, and the induction was carried into effect on 16th July.

July.—"The Presbytery accepted with regret the resignation of the Rev. R. Hamilton, agreed to place on record their deep sympathy with him in the step he had seen it to be his duty to take, their sense of the fidelity and endurance which he had exhibited during his lengthened and laborious ministry in Fitzroy, of the earnestness and ability with which he had preached the everlasting gospel, of the high Christian character which as a minister of the Church he has ever maintained, of the many self-denying and devoted services which he has rendered to the cause of religion and the Church at large, and, further, the Presbytery desires to express the hope that he may yet be long spared to the Church, and may be honoured to do good service in other spheres in the work of the Divine Master."

The attention of the Melbourne Presbytery was drawn to a variety of points mentioned in the public press, affecting the teaching and action of the Rev. Charles Strong, more especially—

1. "To a report in the *Argus* of 28th November, 1882, of a sermon on Sabbath, in which Mr. Strong preached to his congregation doctrine contrary to the Standards of the Church, especially to the 7th and 8th sections of the 21st chapter of the Confession of Faith.

2. "To a report in the *Argus* of 27th April, 1883, of a speech by Mr. Strong, at a meeting held in the Town Hall on the previous evening, in which he advocated procedure contrary to the Standards,

and antagonistic to a resolution of the Presbytery of Melbourne, adopted on 6th February, 1883—viz., against the opening of Public Libraries and Museums on the Lord's Day.

3. "To a report in the *Argus* of 19th May, 1883, of a meeting of the Committee of the 'Sunday Society,' at which a manifesto of the Sunday Society was adopted, at which meeting Rev. Charles Strong is reported to have been present, and as no objection is reported to have been made by him, it is to be inferred that he agreed to the manifesto, in direct opposition to a resolution of the Commission of Assembly, adopted on 2nd May, 1882.

"In the hope that attention having been publicly called to Mr. Strong's objectionable procedure would have the effect of putting a stop to the culpable irregularity pointed out, the Presbytery, while expressing deep regret at the conduct of Mr. Strong, yet resolved in present circumstances to travel no further in the matter."

A letter was afterwards received from Rev. C. Strong, in which "he expressed regret that he found himself in opposition to his brethren on the Sunday question, and stated that, with all respect to the Presbytery, he felt compelled to adhere to his views, and to pursue the course that he had hitherto followed, inasmuch as what he had done had been prompted by the conviction that he was seeking to advance the best interests of the Church and of religion.'

The Presbytery expressed extreme regret at the sentiments expressed in the letter of Rev. C. Strong in relation to the Sabbath, and agreed to adhere to their former finding in regard to the obligations of the Lord's Day. They resolved to keep the letter of Mr. Strong *in retentis.*

August.—The attention of the Melbourne Presbytery was called to a lecture delivered by His Honour Mr. Justice Higinbotham on the evening of 1st August in the Scots Church, Collins-street. A Committee was appointed to consider what action, if any, the Presbytery should take regarding the proceedings on the occasion.

September.—The Rev. Charles Strong, it appeared after inquiry, had invited Mr. Justice Higinbotham to deliver a lecture in the Scots Church on the relations existing between science and Christianity. The learned judge had been long well known in the community as a Unitarian in his religious views. His Honour agreed to lecture as invited in the Presbyterian Church, Collins-street, and, in introducing his subject, explained that the subject had been prescribed to him, and was not one of his own choosing. As might have been expected, the judge did not hesitate to give free scope to his opinions, so strongly at variance with Presbyterian Standards of doctrine, and to pass unfavourable comments on what are regarded as orthodox views. Rev. Mr. Strong presided at the meeting, and at the conclusion made commendatory remarks rather than expressed any dissent from views which were antagonistic to sound Presbyterian beliefs.

The Christian public in general, but the Presbyterians in particular, were astounded at the spectacle of a Unitarian lecturer advocating his principles in a Presbyterian Church, and the minister

of that Church present in the chair without testifying against the erroneous teaching, but rather according, at least in some measure, his commendation.

The Melbourne Presbytery were, of course, more especially roused into action. Accordingly, at the meeting of 4th September, Rev. D. S. M'Eachran gave notice that at next meeting he would commence prosecution and state his charges against the Rev. Charles Strong.

His charges in detail were the following:—

"I beg to give notice that, at next meeting of the Presbytery, I shall charge the Rev. Charles Strong with promulgating and publishing heretical and unsound doctrine by his action in connection with the recent lecture of Mr. Higinbotham and otherwise.

"Also, with being guilty of teaching and conduct tending to destroy the order, unity, and peace of the Church.

"Also, with failure to assert, maintain, and defend the doctrine of the Church when it was in his power to do so.

"And, further, with failure to comply with the instructions of the Presbytery to give prominence in his teaching to the incarnation, the atoning life and death, and the resurrection and ascension of our Lord."

Mr. Strong received due notice from Mr. M'Eachran of his intention to submit this charge.

The Committee appointed to consider the case of the extraordinary proceedings in the Scots Church till the next meeting, a fortnight after, reported that Mr. Justice Higinbotham's lecture in many parts contained statements inconsistent with the Word of God and the Standards of this Church, but that at the same time the circumstances connected with its delivery involved responsibilities of such a character that, by the rules of the Church, the Committee felt themselves precluded from giving counsel as to the course the Presbytery should take; but if the Court is to take any action in the matter some member or members must move that it do so. The Presbytery decided that it was necessary to take proceedings in the case.

On 18th September, Rev. D. S. M'Eachran brought forward his charges in a powerful oration before the Presbytery, and before a crowded audience, the meeting being held in Chalmers Church.

After no small amount of discussion, extending over two days, it was agreed on all sides to bring the case for adjudication before the Assembly.

Rev. J. Patten, Hawthorn, sustained a deep affliction in the removal by death of his beloved wife. The Presbytery sympathised.

A call issued from the congregation of Deniliquin, Riverina, N.S.W., in favour of Rev. W. M. Mackie, Wallan Wallan. He accepted, and was relieved of his charge on the 18th, and was duly inducted into his new pastorate by the Presbytery of Murrumbidgee.

A letter was read from Rev. Charles Strong, resigning his charge as minister of the Scots Church, Collins-street, and his connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The report from the Scots Church congregational meeting, held to consider their minister's resignation, was to the effect "that they received intimation of the resignation with deep regret and sorrow, that for eight years their relations had been cordial and harmonious, and that they acquiesced in his resignation in deference to his desire to leave the Presbyterian Church of Victoria."

The Presbytery, at the meeting held in Chalmers Church, entered on the charges brought against Mr. Strong, and heard Mr. M'Eachran in support of them. His address was lengthy, able, and eloquent.

It was proposed that Rev. C. Strong should be questioned on the fundamental doctrines of Scripture; the deity of Jesus Christ; the various supernatural facts of gospel history; the propitiatory character of Christ's death; the all-prevailing intercession of the living Christ in heaven; the Holy Spirit's place in the Divine Trinity, &c.

Various amendments followed, but at length all agreed in referring the case as mentioned to the General Assembly.

October.—A call came out from the North Williamstown congregation in favour of Rev. L. M. Weir, Simpson's-road, Collingwood. The call was accepted, and the induction effected on the 15th.

A complaint and appeal came before the Melbourne Presbytery against resolutions passed at a meeting of the Scots Church congregation held on the 25th day of September preceding. The resolutions were :—

1. "That the congregation now resolves to take steps to separate from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and to revert to the position it occupied previous to the Act of Union, on the basis of the Standards of the Church of Scotland.

2. "That a Sub-Committee be appointed for the purpose of carrying out the objects aimed at in the previous resolution, and to act in conjunction with the Trustees and Board of Management."

The complaint against the resolutions was based on various grounds—"That the meeting was not regularly called; that the resolutions went beyond the scope of congregational authority; that persons voted who had no connection with the Presbyterian Church; that every congregation entering into the Union had surrendered its separate rights; that the tendency of the movement was to break down the discipline and government of the Church," &c.

The Presbytery, after deliberation, "declared the resolutions to be unconstitutional and illegal, therefore null and void; prohibited the Trustees, Board of Management, and the Sub-Committee from taking any action in the direction indicated; appointed a Committee to watch over this matter and take such steps as may be necessary to protect the interests of the Church."

November.—Rev. F. R. M. Wilson obtained leave of absence for nine months to recruit his health.

December.—The Albert Park congregation agreed to call the Rev. T. E. Ick, M.A., Sandhurst. The invitation was accepted, and the induction was realised on 24th.

The Napier-street Church, Fitzroy, called to the pastorate Rev.

John M'Laren, recently arrived. He accepted, and the induction services were held on the 31st.

Rev. Geo. Dods, M.A., late assistant in the Scots Church, was recognised as under engagement to labour for a time in the service of the congregation.

Messrs. Shields, M'Meekin, B.A., Coutie, B.A., and Robertson, B.A., students, having finished their whole curriculum of study, were licensed to preach the gospel.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 1st May, 1883.

Rev. P. Mercer, D.D., Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	Geo. James Sim, M.A., B.D.—Casterton and Sandford.
,,	,,	J. M. Innes—Bacchus Marsh and Melton.
,,	,,	W. Mathew—Murchison and Dargalong.
Ordination	,,	A. Stewart, M.A.—Shelford and Inverleigh.
,,	,,	James Gibb—Footscray.
,,	,,	A. C. M'Connan—Mia-Mia and Baynton.
Demission	,,	John Thomson, collegiate—Ebenezer, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	A. S. M'Lean—Heathcote.
,,	,,	W. Webster—Wilcannia.
,,	,,	J. M'Arthur—Deniliquin.
,,	,,	Geo. Graham—St. Arnaud.

It was announced that the ex-Moderators had agreed to nominate Rev. John Gardner, of Queenscliff, as the Moderator of next Assembly.

It was reported to the Commission "that Thomas Russell, Esq., of Haremere Hall, Hurst Green, Sussex, England, formerly residing at Rokewood, western district of this Colony, had deposited the sum of £5,000, in trust and at interest, to form a fund to be called the 'Amy Gertrude Russell Fund,' in memory of his deceased daughter, the interest of which should be devoted to the support of a missionary, 'a medical missionary, perhaps,' in Egypt or in some other promising field of mission work, through the instrumentality of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria."

The Commission expressed their gratification that God had put it into the heart of a bereaved father to commemorate the name of his daughter in such a Christian mode, and resolved to convey to Mr. Russell their cordial thanks for his liberal gift to the cause of missions, and for his adoption of this Church as the channel through which it should be dispensed. They fully appreciated the claims of Egypt on the sympathy and missionary effort of British and Victorian Churches, but, considering the expediency of supporting and extending our present missions, and the urgent need of the New Hebrides, where the natives are now not only willing but anxious to receive missionaries, and considering also the claims of China as the largest and most important field for missions in the world, they would suggest to Mr. Russell the New Hebrides and China as the spheres in either of which this Church would prefer having a missionary to be supported by the "Amy Gertrude Russell Fund," but, at the same time, would assure Mr. Russell of their

desire to co-operate with him in any sphere to which God may direct his heart.

Rev. George D. Buchanan, of Baltimore, U.S.A., was reported to have arrived on 16th March. In terms of the Assembly's deliverance, he had been received, after examination of his credentials, as a minister of the Presbyterian Church in America. It was agreed that Mr. Buchanan should be placed under the direction of the Home Mission Committee, to do whatever work might be thought most suitable for him, whether as an evangelist or as a pastor, and the Commission expressed a hope that the bonds of Christian sympathy and affection might be drawn more closely between the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America and the sister Churches of Australia. Mr. Buchanan gave an interesting address on revival work.

Another serious encroachment on the sanctity of the Sabbath was attempted. The Trustees of the Public Library had passed a resolution to open the library, the musuem, and the national gallery as places of resort for the people on the Lord's Day. The Commission agreed to protest against the action of the Trustees in the matter. They also urged upon office-bearers and members of the Church to use their endeavours in opposition to this movement, instructed the Committee on the State of Religion to prepare petitions to be forwarded to both Houses of Legislature by the congregations of the Church against the efforts of the Trustees, and appointed a deputation to wait on the Premier in order to avert the threatened evil. It was afterwards reported that the deputation had been courteously received. Mr. Service, the Premier, expressed his disapproval of the action taken by the Trustees before having consulted Parliament.

The Commission agreed to record an expression of condolence with Rev. J. Caldwell, whose home and heart had been so painfully darkened by the shadow of death; with Rev. S. A. Hamilton, who within a very brief period had been called to mourn the double loss of a wife and daughter; and with Dr. Morrison in his sad bereavement. The death of Mrs. Morrison was not only a great loss to her husband and household, but also to the important educational establishment towards the success of which she so greatly contributed.

Rev. R. T. Walker, M.A., resigned his co-pastorate of Ebenezer Church, Ballaarat, and it was agreed he should take his seat in the Ballaarat Presbytery as a minister *emeritus*.

The Commission expressed regret that the negotiations on the subject of the Hastie Bequest had been abruptly terminated. The following compromise had been proposed :—"That the institutions—viz., the Church of England, the Presbyterian Church, and the University—should accept £50,000, free of all expenses, or that the expenses should be paid out of the *corpus* of the estate, and the balance divided equally between the next of kin on the one part and the Institutions on the other."

However, when, conferring with the Trustees, it was discovered that the value of the estate had reached £120,000, the representatives of the Church of England and of the University with-

drew their assent to the first alternative, and would concur in no arrangement except having the expenses paid out of the estate and the balance divided equally between the next of kin and the Institutions as aforementioned. To this condition the representatives of the next of kin refused to give their assent.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 12TH NOVEMBER, 1883.

REV. JOHN GARDNER, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	W. L. Morton—Ebenezer Church, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	George D. Buchanan—Cairns Memorial Church, East Melbourne.
,,	,,	W. White—Wyndham and Little River.
Translation	,,	W. M. Mackie—Deniliquin.
,,	,,	L. M. Weir—North Williamstown.
Ordination	,,	R. Vance, M.A.—Maryborough.
,,	,,	G. M. Connor—Golden-square, Sandhurst.
,,	,,	J. S. Drummond—St. Arnaud.
,,	,,	W. Macdermid—Heathcote.
,,	,,	D. A. M'Dougall, colleague—St. George's, Geelong.
,,	,,	D. Milne—Duneed and Connewarre.
,,	,,	C. F. Howe—Yackandandah.
Demission	,,	M. Riordan, colleague—Sale.

The notable case of Rev. Charles Strong came before the Assembly, and proved one of the ecclesiastical causes which excited by far the intensest interest of any that had ever come before the Church. Not only the members of Assembly, but the whole Presbyterian Body, were deeply exercised in the matter. The general community, indeed, watched with no small excitement the proceedings of the Courts as the case moved from one stage to another. The whole matter then came before the Assembly by reference from the Melbourne Presbytery. The Assembly sustained the reference, and thereby were bound to look into the merits of the case. It would be an intolerable business to detail here the motions and amendments, the votes and dissents, the speeches and discussions, which followed each other as the case developed both in Presbytery and Assembly. It is quite sufficient that we indicate the leading resolutions which were adopted either unanimously or by large majorities. A variety of propositions were presented to the House, which circled round the points whether there should be inquiry into the teaching and conduct of Rev. C. Strong, whether Mr. Strong should be summoned to appear at the bar, in order that he might be questioned as to his belief in the essential doctrines of the gospel, or simply that he might be required to submit any statement he should see fit to make relative to the charges implied in the ground for inquiry, or whether his resignation should be accepted, and the whole business be summarily concluded.

In the hope that a very tedious discussion might be avoided, or, if not, held in abeyance, it was suggested—"That Mr. Strong should be invited to attend the meeting of Assembly at 6 o'clock p.m., or, at any hour thereafter which he may please to name, to disavow all complicity with the erroneous doctrines of Mr. Justice Higin-

botham's lecture, and to declare his faith in the true deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the propitiatory character of His death, and the real resurrection of His body from the dead." This was carried by an overwhelming majority—one hundred and forty-three to forty-two—over an amendment which was virtually a negative of the motion.

In accordance with this resolution, the Clerk sent the invitation, which was delivered personally to Mr. Strong, and obtained a promise that he would appear at ten o'clock p.m. or send an answer. Upwards of an hour elapsed beyond the time at which Mr. Strong had engaged either to be present or to send an answer, whereupon it was moved, and carried by a large majority—"That Mr. Strong's failure to appear or send an answer in terms of his promise be regarded as contempt of Court, and dealt with accordingly." But just as the Moderator was in the act of declaring the motion carried, a letter from Mr. Strong was handed in. The receipt of the letter was accepted as clearing Mr. Strong from the charge of contempt contained in the motion. The letter was read, and was as follows:—

"Town Hall, Melbourne, 11 p.m. My dear Dr. Nish,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter at nine o'clock to-night, inviting me to appear before the Assembly and state my views on certain points. I have had no time to reply earlier. With all due deference to the Assembly, I must, under the circumstances, decline to do this, even at the risk of being thought uncourteous. I will not dwell upon the point, however important—that, in my humble opinion, the proceedings in connection with my resignation, and Mr. M'Eachran's unsustained and unsustainable charges, have been unconstitutional and even illegal, according to the laws of our Church. But, apart from this, I can see no good which could result from my doing as requested.

"I have been openly charged with being a dishonest and dishonourable man, and most unworthy suspicions have been insinuated. If I am what I have been represented to be, no words of mine can be of any avail to dispel the impression.

"Allow me only to say that I have done my best to serve what seemed to me to be the best interests of the Church and religion while here; that I have preached and tried to practise what I believed to be the essential doctrines of the gospel and of the creed, and that when I find that I can no longer remain a minister of the Presbyterian Church, or sign her Standards, I hope to have the moral courage to leave it. I feel that the brethren who have spoken so strongly against me have neither understood my motives nor spirit.

"With respectful regards to the fathers and brethren, to whom with regret I am compelled to say farewell, and with every good wish for yourself, believe me very truly yours,

"Charles Strong."

At a subsequent meeting, the letter was declared to be unsatisfactory, and it was resolved to resume the consideration of the

reference. In order to shorten discussion, and, as far as possible, secure unanimity in the decision arrived at, a large representative Committee were appointed to consider the reference, and bring forward a motion to be submitted to the Assembly. Accordingly it was reported, on behalf of the Committee, that a friendly conference had been held, and it was agreed by a large majority to recommend the following deliverance:—"Inasmuch as certain charges were preferred against the Rev. Charles Strong in the Presbytery of Melbourne, and Mr. Strong at the same time tendered his resignation; inasmuch as the whole case as it thus stood was referred *simpliciter* to the General Assembly, and the Assembly sustained the reference; and inasmuch as Mr. Strong did not come when invited to meet the General Assembly and state his views, but, in response to the invitation from the Assembly, sent a letter in which, *inter alia*, he characterised the proceedings in connection with his case as 'unconstitutional and illegal,' and, further, had left the Colony while his case was still before the Supreme Court of the Church, the Assembly hereby declare him to be no longer a minister of this Church, dissolve the pastoral tie between him and the Scots Church congregation, and direct the Presbytery of Melbourne to declare the Church vacant." The motion was carried, over an amendment proposing further investigation, by one hundred and thirty-six to six.

It was resolved, on consideration of a proposal to join with others in commemorating the birth of Luther, that the Assembly co-operate with other Protestant denominations in celebrating the 400th anniversary of Luther's birth by a public meeting on Monday evening, 19th inst., and that the Moderator be appointed to represent this Assembly on that occasion.

The efforts of the Assembly, through their Committee on the State of Religion, had been still directed against the desecration of the Lord's Day, against gambling, against all immorality, and in promoting the success of evangelistic operations. There was great cause for satisfaction with the action of the Legislative Assembly, in deciding against the opening of the Public Library, Museum, and National Gallery. It was also a source of gratification that the meetings held by Rev. J. M'Neil as an evangelist had been so well attended and showed good results. He had visited about forty places, conducted over five hundred services, including meetings for prayer, Bible readings, and evangelistic services. In every case believers professed to have been quickened to newness of life, and over twelve hundred had reported themselves as inquirers after salvation.

On the subject of Sabbath-school instruction, the Assembly manifested the usual interest belonging to its vast importance. They commended the higher Christian education scheme to the attention and liberality of the Church, and exhorted the Christian people to use every endeavour to get biblical instruction imparted in the State-schools, by properly qualified teachers, to all who are willing to receive it. They encouraged Sabbath-school teachers to persevere

in their labours, believing that there is no more important work to which the Church can put her hand, and recommended extensive Presbyterial visitation, and the erection of suitable buildings as valuable helps towards efficiency.

The Assembly had the very important task in hand of appointing two permanent professors for the Theological Hall. The duty of nominating two of the Colonial ministers to the office, had been remitted to the Presbyteries, and it was found that nine out of the twelve Presbyteries had nominated, three of them by majorities, Rev. M. Macdonald and Rev. J. L. Rentoul, M.A. In connection with this vital subject, a large Committee was appointed to consider the financial position of the Theological Hall, the salaries to be paid to Professors, the subjects to be taught by them, their tenure of office, the assistance to be rendered to them, and the mode of election.

It was found, after inquiry into the endowments which were in the hands of the Church for professorships, there would be about £1,560, clear of expenses, which would be available for two chairs. With regard to salaries, it was recommended that they should be £750 each, and a residence when erected. The tenure should be the usual professional tenure—on good behaviour, but subject further to the general regulations affecting ministerial office in the Church. It was also resolved to suggest that the chairs should be—(1) Systematic Theology and Church History ; (2) Exegetics and Apologetics.

The Assembly having resolved on proceeding to the election, Rev. M. Macdonald was appointed to the chair of Systematic Theology and Church History ; and Rev. J. L. Rentoul, M.A., was appointed to the chair of Exegetics and Apologetics.

In connection with this important movement, the position of Rev. Dr. Mercer in a special manner was very painfully affected. Through the resolution of the Assembly, in regard to the election of professors, he held that he had no longer a seat in the Assembly, because it was in virtue of his professorship that he had the privilege of membership. He craved leave, therefore, to retire from the Court.

Moreover, on further consideration, Dr. Mercer resolved on resigning his Treasurership, and his position as General Secretary. It was agreed to appoint a special Committee to confer with Dr. Mercer, and, if possible, to devise a scheme by which his valuable services might be retained in some sphere and manner congenial to his feelings. A conference was held on the subject, but without discovering the means of a satisfactory arrangement.

It was agreed to put on record the following minute relative to Dr. Mercer :—

"The Assembly accept the resignation by Dr. Mercer of his position as General Secretary and Treasurer with feelings of deep and unfeigned regret. The assiduous diligence, the courteous tact, the skilful accuracy and precision with which he has discharged the duties of these offices, his high literary attainments, his unblemished personal worth, his suavity of manner, so fitly combined with appropriate firmness, especially as displayed in superintending the varied operations of the Home Mission Committee, have secured for him a

deservedly high meed of respect and esteem. While it would have gratified them much more if they had succeeded in retaining his services, or if he could have been prevailed upon to take the offer made to him by the Assembly, they can unanimously assure him that he has their best wishes for his future usefulness and comfort, and that whatever may be the sphere of usefulness which he is hereafter to occupy, he will carry with him their appreciative remembrances of his past effective services, and that whatever aid it may be in their power to render for the furthering of his interests, they will be ready to accord."

In regard to missionaries in the New Hebrides, who are under the necessity of sending their children to the Colony for education, it was made a standing law of the Church—"That the allowance for children up to eight years of age should be *nil*; for children from eight to twelve, £10 per annum, and for children from twelve to sixteen, £50 per annum, when the allowances should cease."

Rev. J. G. Paton and Rev. D. Macdonald had been travelling over the Church, preaching, addressing congregations, stirring up an increased interest in missions, and making collections for the funds. During the past twelve months hundreds of meetings had been held in Victoria and South Australia. The result was that a more cheerful tone than usual could be adopted in reporting on the missions of the Church. The funds had been nearly doubled, not only in the New Hebrides Mission, but in all the missions.

The Ormond College Missionary Association had concentrated their efforts on behalf of the Church Mission to the Chinese, and had handed over £100 to the funds.

In reference to the "Amy Gertrude Russell Fund," Mr. Russell, in a most liberal spirit, deferred to the judgment of the Assembly, as to devoting the fund to the New Hebrides Mission if they should see meet.

A cheering announcement was also made to the effect that the late Mr. Suetonius Officer had bequeathed £1,000 in aid of the Heathen Missions Fund. The information afforded no small gratification, and called forth a resolution "to convey to the widow the Assembly's appreciation of her late husband's munificence."

Mr. Officer had also bequeathed £1,000 to the Sustentation Fund, £1,000 to the Theological Endowment Fund, and £500 to the Infirm Ministers' Fund.

Rev. D. Macdonald had returned to his duties in Efaté in good health and with renewed vigour.

A report had been brought up from the Presbytery of Melbourne, not only of the proceedings regarding Mr. Strong's doctrinal teaching, but also regarding the congregation of Scots Church threatening to separate from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and to wrest the property from its present legal connection. It further appeared from the records of the Session—(1) that the Session convened the meeting in question in the usual way, at the request of the Secretary of the Board of Management, which request was as follows:—"For the purpose of considering the position in which the

congregation has been placed by the action of the Presbytery of Melbourne," and (2) that the Session had no notice or knowledge of any resolution which it was intended to propose at such special meeting.

In reference to the adverse resolutions of the congregational meeting, the Presbytery of Melbourne had declared them without effect, and appointed a Committee to watch over this matter till the General Assembly should meet.

A letter was read to the Presbytery which had been sent by the Secretary of the Trustees to the Clerk of Session, requesting "that he would inform the Presbytery that the Trustees were not aware of having done, or of intending to do, anything which justified the Presbytery in addressing to them the prohibition contained in the resolution, and that they intended to follow the advice of counsel, irrespective of the Presbytery on the one hand, or any section of the congregation on the other."

The Chairman of the Sub-Committee appointed to take steps to secure the separation of the congregation from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, also wrote in a similar strain—"That the prohibition contained in the Presbytery's resolution was unwarrantable; that the action of the congregation was justifiable; and that, in carrying out the instructions which they had received, they would act with all possible energy and in direct accordance with law."

The Assembly, in considering the whole report of the Presbytery with regard to the action taken by a certain portion of the Scots Church congregation, agreed, without immediately disposing of the report, "to appoint a large Committee to confer with the Scots Church congregation and its office-bearers, in regard to the whole matter, in the hope that the difficulties which have arisen may be amicably settled. But in case the Committee fail in accomplishing this object, that they be instructed to watch any further steps which may be taken towards carrying out the proposed alienation of the Church property, and to resist to the utmost any such unconstitutional procedure."

Another motion was adopted relative to the Trustees of the Scots Church property, which was as follows:—"That the Trustees of the Scots Church property, if requested to do so by the Committee which this Assembly has appointed to confer with them, and to watch over the Church's interests in the property, be required to furnish, before the first day of May in each year, a true and correct account, to the close of the preceding year, of all receipts and disbursements made by them as Trustees, in accordance with the 12th section of the Act 8, William IV., No. 7, the first accounts to date from the time of their appointment as Trustees, and the subsequent accounts to date from the close of the last preceding account. Further—That this resolution is to be held as applying to all properties held under the same tenure as the properties of the Scots Church, and that the Clerk be instructed to issue notice to this effect to all Trustees similarly charged by the terms of their Trusts."

The Widows and Orphans' Fund Committee could report an in-

crease of £978 8s. 4d. to the capital, thereby raising it to £23,686 4s. 3d. There were thirty-two widows and fifty-three orphans dependent on the fund.

The Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund had an increase of £1,626 2s. 3d., raising the capital to £13,359 4s. 10d. There were eight annuitants to the fund, who were in the receipt of £66 10s. per annum on an average. An important regulation was adopted, viz.—"That any minister who shall fall twelve months in arrears shall pay interest on the same, at the rate of ten per cent. per annum, and if not paid up at the end of two years, with interest thereon, shall forfeit all right in the fund."

Another rule, declared to be a standing law of this Church, was approved, affecting the missionaries who were employed in the service of the Church. The new law was as follows:—"Ordained missionaries of this Church, appointed to labour among the heathen, are required to connect themselves with the Infirm Ministers' Fund, and the Committee on Missions to the Heathen takes the place of a Presbytery towards them in reference to this fund. In lieu of the collections from congregations, when such are ordered by the Assembly, the Mission Committee pay the sum of £5 annually for each missionary who is connected with the fund."

The thanks of the Assembly were tendered to Rev. Dr. Nish and Rev. J. Ballantyne for the satisfactory manner in which they had done the work assigned them in the preparation of the manual on the Sacraments.

In the report of the Board of Investment and Finance, it appeared that the collections for all the different funds of the Church showed, with only one exception, an increase on the preceding year. There had been an absolute sale of two valuable Church properties in course of the year, viz.—the John Knox Church and the Prahran Church properties. The whole amount of money bearing interest under the management of the Committee was £47,657 18s 4d. The interest received during the year amounted to £2,897 12s. 3d. The Ormond Council, however, had a separate Treasurer of their own, while their business had been carried on for three years in the office of the Church. The Board had cause to record, with sorrow, the loss sustained by the death of the Hon. John Cumming.* He had given valuable services for many years to the Church. He had been a Trustee of the Ormond College. He was also Convener of the Committee on the Scotch College.

It was agreed to declare, in the Assembly's deliverance on the report of the Board of Investment and Finance, that all applications for certificates of title ought to include in them, as powers of disposition—"The power to sell, lease, mortgage, or exchange," but

* Memorial Notice.

The Assembly agreed to record their sorrow at his death, and instructed the Clerk to convey to Mrs. Cumming an assurance of the high esteem in which Mr. Cumming was held by the Assembly, and of their prayerful sympathy with her in her great sorrow.

that it should be distinctly understood and minuted that congregations applying for permission only to lease or mortgage should have no authority to exceed this permission, without making a new application to the Assembly; and that all certificates when obtained should be placed in the hands of the Treasurer, and kept for security in the strong room attached to our offices.

The report on Ormond College was still cheerful and hopeful. There had been thirty-five resident and four non-resident students attending lectures on University subjects, three of the former attending the Theological Hall only. It was felt there was great need of scholarships, in order to aid young men of ability who did not possess sufficient means to enable them to study for the Church or the professions.

It afforded great pleasure in announcing that, in addition to the splendid legacy of £20,000 bequeathed by the late Mr. Wyselaskie to the Theological Hall Fund, a sum of £10,000 was left to the Building Fund of Ormond College. And as Mr. Ormond had intimated his intention of building the whole of the College, the Council proposed to expend a part of the legacy in the erection of homes for the Theological Professors in the College grounds.

Under the able management of the Master of the College, so great had been its success that the accommodation had not been sufficient for all the applicants for admission. Accordingly, by the munificent liberality of the founder, plans had been prepared and a contract taken for a new wing, which, when finished, would cost about £15,000. The Presbyterian Church has cause for great thankfulness to God that she numbers among her members one so full of Christian generosity as the Hon. Francis Ormond.

CHAPTER XIV.

EVENTS OF THE YEAR.—1884.

February.—Professors M. Macdonald and J. L. Rentoul, having been freed from their ministerial charges, took their seats as members of Presbytery in virtue of the new office which they had been called to fill.

Rev. J. M'L. Abernethy was granted leave of absence for twelve months in order to visit Europe.

Rev. W. S. Rolland, having accepted a call to the pastorate from the Hawksburn or Prahran congregation, which was formed through his own missionary efforts, was duly ordained and inducted on 3rd March.

It was arranged that the installation of the Rev. Professors Macdonald and Rentoul should be effected in the Assembly Hall on the evening of 24th March.

March.—The Presbyterian residents of Lake Rowan, Presbytery of Beechworth, gave Rev. William Souter, Whittlesea, a call, which he accepted. He was relieved of his charge on 1st April, transferred to the other Presbytery, and soon after inducted.

Rev. Dr. Gilchrist, Union Church, North Melbourne, demitted his charge, on the ground of enfeebled health, and contemplated a voyage to Europe. He was relieved on the 18th March.

Rev. R. Hamilton, late of Fitzroy, obtained leave of absence from the duties of the gaol, having made arrangement for the discharge of his duties by a substitute. His object was to seek recruited energy by a voyage to Britain.

April.—Rev. J. A. Stuart, Soldiers' Hill, Ballaarat, having been called to the pastorate of the Simpson's-road congregation, Collingwood, accepted, and was inducted on the 15th inst.

May.—Announcement was made of the recent departure from this life of Rev. James Lambie, at Prahran, formerly of Werribee, latterly retired as minister *emeritus*.*

The Presbyterians at Kensington were organised as a congregation on the 15th.

The Wallan Wallan threefold charge called Rev. J. B. Reid, Mansfield, to the pastorate, but he did not accept.

June.—Rev. J. Hay, Elsternwick, was granted leave of absence for twelve months, under medical advice, with a view to recruit his health. Thereby the Moderatorship of the Kirk Session of Scots Church was made vacant. Rev. W. G. Fraser was appointed in his place.

Rev. Professor Rentoul, M.A., obtained the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from the Theological faculty of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

Rev. A. F. Knox retired from the position of a minister of the

Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and received a certificate of disjunction.

Kangaroo Ground, which had been disjoined from Lilydale, was connected with Whittlesea and Morang, so that the three places might constitute one ministerial charge.

July.—The Melbourne Presbytery received from the Clerk of the Special Commission of Assembly, which had been appointed in an emergency to watch over the interests of the Church, a complaint against the Moderator and Session of the Scots Church congregation, because they had called a meeting of the members for the 3rd June, the object of which was to approve or otherwise of the Bill proposed to be introduced into Parliament affecting the properties of the Church, Collins-street. Although they were cautioned beforehand that the meeting of the congregation for such a purpose was unconstitutional and illegal, yet they had not only called the meeting, but the Moderator attended and opened the business by prayer. Resolutions were adopted at the meeting approving of the Bill, and a petition in support of it was agreed to, in direct opposition to the authority of the Assembly, and to the interests of the Church. The object of the private Bill was to alienate the properties from the Assembly.

In answering for themselves, the explanations of the Session were unsatisfactory, and the Moderator was superseded in his position. Rev. D. Mackenzie received the appointment in his stead.

August.—The Presbytery agreed to place on record an expression of deep sympathy with Mr. M. L. Hutchinson, one of the elders of the Presbytery, on account of the removal by sudden death of his beloved wife.

September.—Professor Rentoul obtained leave of absence for six months to go on a visit to Great Britain.

Conferences were held on the State of Religion and on the Sabbath-school work in the Melbourne Presbytery.

A call had emanated the previous month from the congregation of East St. Kilda, in favour of Rev. J. G. Mackie, of Beechworth, and, having accepted, he was inducted on the 30th inst.

October.—Rev. P. J. Murdoch, M.A., late of Cruden, Aberdeenshire, Scotland, recently arrived. Mr. Murdoch came to Victoria in answer to a call from the West Melbourne congregation, which he had accepted at the hands of Commissioners appointed by the congregation. Arrangements having been made by the Presbytery previous to his arrival for holding the induction services, he was duly installed on the 7th inst.

Rev. J. Murdoch, late minister of the Free Church, Pitsligo, Scotland, arrived. The Presbytery of Deer testified to his having long served the Church with signal ability. He had now retired.

Rev. John M'Neil, B.A., evangelist, had returned from Western Australia, having gone to Perth on mission work under the counsel of the Presbytery. A cordial expression of thanks from the Presbytery was conveyed to Mr. M'Neil for the earnest, self-denying, and efficient services which he had rendered to the Church and to the

cause of religion in carrying out the mission on which he had been sent.

Mr. J. T. C. Coutie, B.A., licentiate, obtained leave of absence in order to visit the old country, partly for travel and partly for study, and for benefit arising from intercourse with ministers and Churches.

November.—The sudden and unexpected decease of Rev. J. Murdoch, father of the newly-settled minister of West Melbourne, was announced. A high tribute has been paid to his memory as a man of ability and culture, and as a minister of Christ whose career had been distinguished by fidelity, usefulness, and irreproachable Christian character.

The congregation of Hotham had called Rev. J. T. Robertson, M.A. The call was accepted, and the induction effected on 1st December.

Rev. Charles Strong had pressed the Melbourne Presbytery for the "usual certificate." The matter was referred for instruction to the General Assembly. The Presbytery were directed to furnish Mr. Strong with an extract minute of the resolution of the Assembly, passed on the 15th November, 1883, which sets forth the circumstances under which he ceased to be a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

December.—Rev. J. Thomson received a call from the Kensington congregation, which he accepted. His induction took place on the 18th.

Rev. L. M. Weir resigned his charge of the North Williamstown congregation with the view of returning to Scotland to rejoin his wife and family. He was released on the 16th inst.

Mr. G. Carson, having accepted a call from Wallan Wallan district, was ordained and inducted on the 18th.

It was agreed to put on record a minute relating to the bequests of Mr. J. D. Wyselaskie.

The minute was as follows :—"The Assembly, in placing on record the seasonable and valuable bequests of the late Mr. J. D. Wyselaskie—1st, towards the endowment of Theological Professorships; 2nd, towards the augmentation of the Theological Hall Building Fund; 3rd, towards the Ladies' College; and 4th, towards the endowment of the congregation at Wickliffe—desire to convey to Mrs. Wyselaskie their high appreciation of the liberality of these bequests, and the assurance of their readiness to apply them in such manner, accordant with the terms of the bequests, as may be most agreeable to her wishes, and as may most fittingly serve to perpetuate the name of the donor."

Another minute was agreed upon regarding the services rendered by Rev. A. J. Campbell, Rev. A. R. Boyd M'Cay, M.A., and others in connection with the Theological Hall, to the following effect :—"On the retirement of Rev. A. J. Campbell and Rev. A. R. Boyd M'Cay from their connection with the Theological Hall, the Assembly resolved to record their high appreciation of the services of these brethren in the training of students for the ministry for

many years, and to convey to them the best thanks of the Assembly and this Church, and also that cordial thanks should be recorded to Rev. Dr. Macdonald, Rev. A. Yule, M.A., and Mr. A. Harper, M.A., B.D., for their important and effective services in connection with the Hall."

Still further, the following minute was adopted in regard to the services of Mr. J. C. Stewart, as Law Agent of the Church :—"In accepting with regret the resignation of Mr. J. C. Stewart as Law Agent of this Church, the General Assembly record their deep sense of the lasting obligations under which the Church has been placed by the many able and valuable services rendered by him during his term of office—services at all times cheerfully given, and beneficial to the general interests of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria."

Finally, a minute was adopted in reference to the service rendered by Rev. J. O. Dykes, D.D., of London, in connection with the Hall, viz. :—"The General Assembly request the Moderator to convey to Dr. Oswald Dykes their warmest thanks for the great service which he had rendered to this Church in the discharge of the very important commission which was entrusted to him. They were aware when they ventured to impose upon their brother the duty of selecting a principal and first professor for our Theological Hall that they were laying upon him a duty of the gravest and most delicate kind, involving a large correspondence, and demanding the exercise of a very sound discretion ; and, although his efforts have not secured their primary object, they beg to assure him that they have been of eminent use in clearing the path before the Church. In transmitting to Dr. Dykes this expression of their gratitude for the signal benefit conferred upon them in connection with this matter, the Assembly offer him their brotherly salutations and their hearty good wishes that it may please God to spare him for lengthened and distinguished service in the Church and in the world."

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 6TH MAY, 1884.

REV. JOHN GARDNER, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	T. B. Swift—Alexandra.
,,	,,	J. M'Laren—Fitzroy.
,,	,,	W. C. Macdonald, M.A.—Chiltern.
,,	,,	W. Webster—Inglewood.
,,	,,	V. M. Riordan—Chalmers Church, Sandhurst.
Ordination	,,	W. S. Rolland—Prahran.
Translation	,,	W. Thomson—Camperdown.
,,	,,	A. M'Conman—Benalla.
,,	,,	W. Souter—Lake Rowan.
,,	,,	J. A. Stuart—Simpson's-road, Collingwood.
,,	,,	T. E. Ick, M.A —Albert Park, South Melbourne.
Installation	,,	Murdoch Macdonald—Professor of Systematic Theology and Church History.
,,	,,	J. L. Rentoul, M.A., D.D.—Professor of Exegetics and Apologetics.
Demission	,,	A J. Campbell—St. George's, Geelong.
,,	,,	Dr. Gilchrist—Hotham.

Demission—Rev. W. F. Main—Bairnsdale.
,, ,, H. Swan—Donald.
,, ,. H. H. Finlay—Carngham and Linton.
,, ,, J. W. Lawson—Dunolly.
,, ,, R. Vance, M.A.—Maryborough.
,, ,, J. E. Armour—Woodend and Newham.
Death ,, James Lambie—minister *emeritus*.

It was reported that the Conference on the Union of Australian Presbyterian Churches had been held in Melbourne in June, 1883, and that another would be held in Sydney in July, 1884. A large number of members were appointed as deputies to attend the next Conference.

It was announced that the ex-Moderators had agreed to nominate Rev. John Clark as Moderator of next Assembly.

It was agreed to insert in the records the subjoined minute, relative to the deaths of Rev. A. Simpson, Rev. J. Lambie, and Mr. George Hope.*

PRO RE NATA MEETING OF ASSEMBLY, 8TH MAY, 1884.

REV. JOHN GARDNER, MODERATOR.

The cause of this extraordinary meeting was the action of certain Trustees and office-bearers of the Scots Church congregation, Collins-street, who had given public notice of their intention to ask Parliament to pass a private Bill to alienate the Scots Church property from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and the object was to take such steps as might be necessary to frustrate their declared purpose.

The Sub-Committee that had been appointed to confer with the Trustees and office-bearers of the Scots Church gave in their report, were thanked for their diligence, and were discharged.

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* MEMORIAL MINUTE.

The Commission, in recording the removal by death of the Rev. Archibald Simpson and the Rev. James Lambie, feel saddened at the loss sustained by the Church through the decease of these honoured brethren. The one was a Colonial minister for thirty years, and the other for twenty-one years. They both occupied country districts, and both laboured over wide fields. It was the will of God to spare them till old age, and there is but one opinion, that they served the Master with much zeal and with untarnished reputation. The Commission regard the memories of departed ministers who have spent their lives in the service of the gospel as a precious inheritance, and consider that their names should not be allowed to pass into oblivion, while at the same time they pray the Lord to spare to this Church, and to every Church, a due proportion of aged ministers, to give the benefit of their ripened experience and example to the younger labourers in the vineyard.

The Commission have also had their attention drawn to the decease of George Hope, Esq., of Darriweel, an elder of this Church and a member of the last General Assembly. Mr. Hope was one of the oldest residents of the parish of Moorabool, and was greatly esteemed by all his neighbours. He took an active interest in the establishment of a Presbyterian Church in his district, to which he gave a generous support, and which he assisted by his wise Christian counsels. While the Commission bewail the loss of so valuable an office-bearer, his work remains, and "the memory of the just is blessed."

The report of the Committee on the Scots Church property was also submitted. They received the best thanks of the Assembly, and their resignation was accepted.

The Assembly resumed consideration of the report of the Melbourne Presbytery relative to the Scots Church property, and declared the action of a portion of the congregation of the Scots Church, in attempting to wrest said property from its rightful owners, to be unconstitutional, illegal, and unjust.

The Assembly resolved to oppose the passing of the Bill, of which notice had been given, by all lawful methods, and for that end instructed their Law Agent and official representative to see that the necessary petition be lodged at the proper time.

It was next agreed—"That a Special Commission of Assembly, with corresponding members in each Presbytery, be now appointed to act in this matter, with instructions to raise a Property Defence Fund, employ the necessary agents, secure the co-operation of the other Churches, and use all lawful efforts to secure the rejection of the Bill.

It was further resolved that the several congregations of the Church be instructed to take immediate steps to have petitions prepared, signed by their members and adherents, praying Parliament not to entertain the Bill, and to see that these petitions are forwarded to the special Commission for presentation.

It was next agreed—That the Moderator be instructed to sign any documents passed by the Special Commission, in the same manner as he signs documents of the General Assembly.

The statement of the Committee relative to the Scots Church property was remitted to the Special Commission for re-consideration.

A petition from members and adherents of the Scots Church to Parliament had been laid on the table of the Assembly, but instead of dealing with it, the Assembly referred it to the special Commission.

From these various resolutions, it appears that the Assembly, through their Sub-Committee, failed to come to an amicable arrangement with the Trustees and office-bearers of the Scots Church. A congregational meeting had been held to consider the proposition—on the part of the Assembly's Sub-Committee—to confer with the office-bearers and members on the difficulties which seemed to have arisen. But the resolution adopted by the congregation, having been carried by a large majority, was—"That, in the circumstances, the congregation see no advantage to be gained from the proposed conference;" but intimation was given "That the Session and the managers, with the congregation's Committee appointed on the 26th September to deal with this matter, would be prepared to receive the Assembly's Committee in the Scots Church on the evening of the 18th inst."

However, in view of the resolution passed by the Scots Church congregation, it was judged by the Assembly's Committee that it would serve no good purpose to have any further conference for the

present with their Trustees or managers. Meanwhile, the law agent was instructed to call upon the Trustees of the Scots Church property, as appointed by the Assembly, to furnish a statement of the receipts and disbursements made by them as Trustees.

For a copy of the Bill, see appendix (H).

Proceedings of the Special Commission of Assembly Appointed by the pro re nata Meeting of Assembly on 8th May, 1884, Relative to the Scots Church Property Bill.

The Commission followed out the instructions of the Assembly in reference to raising a Property Defence Fund, and the revising of the statement issued by the Assembly's Committee. They secured the co-operation of the Church of England, the Wesleyan, the Primitive Methodist, the Bible Christian Churches, and the Executive of the Congregational Union against the proposed Bill. They waited on the Premier and pointed out the effect of the Bill in regard to public policy and private rights. They forwarded a petition to all the ministers of the Church, to be signed by the members of their congregations and presented to Parliament.

A lengthened and formal petition, in opposition to the Bill, signed by the Moderator on behalf of the Church, was presented to the Legislature.

A similar petition was presented by a number of the members and adherents of the Scots Church congregation who were opposed to the proposed Bill.

The Trustees of the Church property were served with a notice from the Parliamentary Agent for the Bill, requesting them to state whether they assented to or dissented from the proposed Bill. They replied that "they had been instructed by the General Assembly to express dissent from the proposed measure, and requested by the congregation to express assent thereto."

The Commission prepared a reply to a statement which had been issued by the promoters of the Bill, and had it largely circulated.

The Commission, having learned on Monday, the 2nd June, that the Scots Church Session had on the previous day called from the pulpit a meeting of the congregation for Tuesday, the 3rd June, "To approve or otherwise of the Bill proposed to be introduced into Parliament affecting the properties of the congregation, and to give instructions respecting the presentation of the necessary petition and otherwise," notified the Session, and especially the Moderator, that a meeting for such a purpose was unconstitutional, and could not be legally held, and cautioned them that they would be held responsible. Notice was served personally on the Moderator of Session, who, nevertheless, attended and constituted the meeting.

The Commission applied to the Session for a copy of the voting paper that had been issued to the members and adherents, and a return showing the names of those who voted and how they voted, and the reply was that they were unable to give the information required. The Kirk Session were then asked to produce the voting papers. The answer was that no member of Session knew what

had become of the voting papers since the same had been laid aside. The results ascertained by the returns to Parliament were six hundred and twenty-six for, and forty-five against.

The Commission, as instructed by the Assembly, used all necessary means to secure the rejection of the proposed Bill, and were gratified to be able to state that the promoters of the Bill had decided absolutely to withdraw it.

The Commission, having been fully aware of the misconception in the public mind, if not positive ignorance, of the whole case, as between the Church and the congregation, got reprinted from the official *Hansard* the speeches made by Mr. R. Harper in the Legislative Assembly on the "Scots Church Bill" for general circulation.

The Commission placed on record their high appreciation of the unceasing labours of Mr. R. Harper, M.L.A., in securing the defeat of the Bill, and the valuable services he had rendered to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. A high estimate was also formed of the important services rendered in the matter by Mr. J. M. Davies, the Law Agent of the Church.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 10th November, 1884.

Rev. John Clark, Moderator.

Induction—Rev.	H. H. Finlay—Mooroopna.
,,	,,	A. S. M'Lean—Bairnsdale.
,,	,,	John M'Connell—Scots Church, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	P. J. Murdoch, M.A.—West Melbourne.
Translation	,,	J. G. Mackie—East St. Kilda.
Ordination	,,	J. J. Spalding, B.A., collegiate—Buninyong.
,,	,,	R. S. M'Meekin, B.A.—Apsley and Edenhope.
Demission	,,	H. B. Giles—Belfast.
Death	,,	William Henderson—St. Andrew's, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	A. Maxwell—Barrabool.

There were forty-eight items of business.

In regard to the Widows and Orphans' Fund, it was found that an addition had been made to the capital during the year of £723 1s. 9d. There were one hundred and fifty-four ratepayers, thirty-five widows, and fifty-three orphans assisted by the fund. The total capital amounted to £24,409 6s. The revenue was £2,897 15s. 3d., and the expenditure £2,174 13s. 6d.

In the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, there was an increase of the capital since the preceding year of £979 15s. 1d. There were six annuitants now on the fund. The whole capital amounted to £14,336 19s. 11d. The income had been £1,565 6s. 5d. and the expenditure £584 4s. 4d.

It was agreed to adopt and present loyal congratulatory addresses to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, on the occasion of his reaching the forty-fourth anniversary of his birth, and to Sir Henry Brougham Loch, K.C.B., on account of his appointment to act as the representative of Her Majesty Queen Victoria in this Colony.

The Assembly resolved to put on record a minute relative to the deaths of the Rev. A. Maxwell and Rev. W. Henderson. It was to the effect as below * :—

The Committee on Heathen Missions had still a cheering report to give of the financial condition. There was a considerable balance to credit on all the funds—Chinese and Aborigines, £360; New Hebrides, £1,027; *Dayspring* Maintenance, £826; *Dayspring* Insurance, £3,196; Native Teachers' Fund, £468; New Hebrides Mission, No. 2, £747.

The reports respecting the aborigines at Ramahyuck and Coranderrk brought no new feature to light.

The Chinese Mission sustained loss by the death of one of the agents, Paul Ah Chin.†

James Chue was conducting a training class attended by three students, while he visited the Chinese in and around Ballaarat, and

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* The Assembly expressed their sense of the loss sustained by the Church in their removal.

Though Mr. Maxwell was but a few years connected with our Church, and was therefore not much known, yet his abilities as a preacher commanded attention, wherever he exercised his ministry, and his loss will be deeply felt in the circle in which he was known and esteemed.

In Mr. Henderson, the Church has lost not only one of the most outstanding of her ministers, but one of those who, arriving in the early days of settlement here, helped to establish Presbyterianism in the Colony, and bring about the Union of 1859. Occupying for a few years a Church in the neighbourhood of Melbourne, Mr. Henderson was in 1858 translated to St. Andrew's, Ballaarat, where he gathered around him a large and influential congregation, of which he remained the beloved and respected minister until his death. Gifted with great natural ability, Mr. Henderson added thereto the matured scholarship of a life-long student, his reading having been at once close and extensive. As a preacher of the gospel, he occupied a high position, rejoicing in the opportunity given him to hold forth the cross of Christ as the sinner's only hope, and the living Saviour as the believer's perfect example; while as a lecturer on scientific, literary, and general social questions, he exercised a widespread and beneficial influence, especially on the young men of the Colony. An ardent lover of civil and religious liberty, he was ever ready to denounce a public wrong or defend the cause of truth when assailed. A loyal son of the Presbyterian Church, he was ever tolerant of the opinions of others, believing as he did that denominational loyalty might ever be in perfect agreement with true scriptural catholicity. Of a kindly disposition, Mr. Henderson's warm-hearted, genial nature made him the friend of rich and poor, endearing him in no ordinary way to those who were brought into closer contact with him. All this but tends to deepen the loss sustained in Mr. Henderson's removal, and the Assembly, while bowing submissively to the will of God, and thanking Him for the gift of such a man, would earnestly pray the Great Head of the Church to raise up others to fill the breaches which death has thus made in our midst, and to take up and carry out the work already so successfully begun.

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† Memorial Minute.

He was a sincere and devoted Christian, and had long been suffering from lung disease, which gradually undermined his strength till he fell asleep. He was faithfully tended by his Christian countrymen during his last illness till he expired. He died in Richmond, the scene of his labours.

also superintended the work at Ararat and Deep Lead. Two converts had been baptised in Ballaarat, and the aspect of the mission was upon the whole cheering and hopeful.

Petitions had been sent to the Legislature by the different religious bodies, who acted in concert, praying that restrictions might be imposed on the traffic in opium.

The work in Efaté, carried on so vigorously by Rev. D. Macdonald, among the heathen, afforded great encouragement. He described his regular occupation of time while earnestly seeking to extend and consolidate the mission in the New Hebrides :—"Out in the boat two days in the week, Thursdays and Sabbaths. On Thursday I go to hold a very important candidate class, a distance of about seven miles, and meet the assembled people of two villages. I hold a similar class for other two villages every Wednesday forenoon. The teachers' training class is regularly held as usual, Tuesdays and Fridays. The Sabbath is very fully occupied, boating and conducting services. There is also a prayer meeting every Wednesday evening. The teachers' training class is attended by twenty persons. The number of catechumens under training is considerably over a hundred." Mr. Macdonald recorded the founding of several Christian villages during the year. The abandonment of heathenism rendered it necessary for the converts to withdraw from the society of the heathen. The result was the formation of a Christian hamlet, which gradually grew from a few houses to twenty or thirty, and became a new centre of healthful influence.

Great anxiety was continually expressed in the communications of the missionaries for the Imperial Government to annex these islands to Great Britain, and thereby effectually protect the mission and its work against the extension of French interests and the disastrous effects of French influence. This was the one great fear that continually haunted the mind of the missionary, knowing, from painful experience, that, wherever in any of the South Sea Islands French occupation is established, there the missions of Protestants are injured or destroyed.

It was agreed that the Presbytery of Hamilton should be divided. The new Presbytery should be called the Presbytery of Penola, and for the present should embrace the congregations of Mount Gambier, Penola, Narracoorte, Apsley, and Edenhope, these being disjoined from the Presbytery of Hamilton.

An interesting report was submitted by the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee. It is by the operations of this Committee that the pulse of the Church is indicated. Its living power in the community, whether for subsistence or extension, is hereby brought to light.

The following were the additions made to the working staff of the Church during the year :—"Rev. J. M'Connell, from the Irish Presbyterian Church ; Rev. W. G. Dixon, M.A., from the Free Church of Scotland ; Rev. G. Carson, from the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland ; Rev. J. T. Robertson, M.A., an ordained minister, from the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales ; Mr.

R. M. Fergus, M.A., student in theology, from the Free Church of Scotland; Mr. J. W. Mackay, student in theology, from United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Besides these there were licentiates of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria—S. M'Meekin, B.A.; C. Robertson, T. J. C. Coutie, B.A.; W. Shiels, LL.B.

There were about thirty vacant congregations requiring supply, besides a large number of preaching or mission stations. There had been seventeen ministers and preachers settled in the course of the year. Five student evangelists and twelve missionaries were also employed.

Several Presbyteries had done signal service by the efforts put forth in order to supply destitute and thinly-peopled localities with the ordinances of the gospel. By one of these, missionary operations had been carried on, over an extensive and difficult field, during the summer months, at thirteen different centres of population.

The students of Ormond College belonging to the Missionary Society had made it one of their objects to carry on Home Mission work in some suitable district of Melbourne or its suburbs. This might well be regarded as a hopeful sign in the young men undergoing training for the ministry. With the appointment of two permanent Professors, and these men of such learning and ability as Mr. Macdonald and Dr. Rentoul, who will devote their whole time and energies to the work of the Hall, and with such inducements as are held out to students by means of scholarships, there was the hope warranted that the number of students would increase, and that the time was not distant when the Church should no longer be dependent on the Home Churches for help.

With regard to the Sustentation Fund there was £831 4s. 11d. to be distributed among the ministers of weak congregations.

A Committee was appointed to consider the whole subject of Sustentation, Church Extension, and Home Missions.

An encouraging report continued to be made regarding the Ladies' College. Liberal arrangements were made among the friends of the Church for the extinction of the floating debt. The efforts put forth were entirely successful. One gentleman contributed £500 and another £250 to the object. The result should be a saving of £120 per annum in interest, which would enhance the sinking fund. A gratifying announcement had been made that a sum of £3,500 had been received from the executors of the late Mr. Wyselaskie, who had bequeathed that amount to the College for the building of a hall. At the Matriculation Examination in December last, the pupils of the College had been again brilliantly successful. They gained six first-class honours when no other school gained more than three, and four second-class when no other school, save the Scotch College, gained more than two. The religious instruction was reported to be of the most careful and thorough sort.

The report of the Scotch College was altogether satisfactory. During 1883 forty boys passed the Matriculation and thirty-seven the Civil Service Examination. In the lists of the Ordinary and

Honour Examination, a larger number of former students appeared than on any previous occasion, having obtained thirty-five passes in their respective years. During the year five former students were admitted as solicitors, one received the certificate of engineer, one was called to the English bar, seven took degrees at Melbourne University, one graduated in arts at Oxford, and five received medical degrees in the British Isles.

Military drill, of which all the boys had the advantage, had been introduced with excellent effect, and a cadet corps had been formed.

At the last Speech Day the College was honoured with the presence of the Earl and Countess of Rosebery, who presented a prize of five guineas. This year His Excellency the Governor and Lady Loch had consented to be present and distribute the prizes.

An indication was given in the course of the Assembly's proceedings of a desire that on the occasion of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria completing her Jubilee, which would be within the next three years, there should be a befitting commemoration of the event, and that this might be done by some special and generous effort on a large scale, in connection with one or more of the important and urgent schemes of the Church.

A rule of interim authority was adopted in reference to calls addressed to ministers of Presbyterian Churches in another country. It was as follows :—

"A congregation desirous to obtain a minister from a Presbyterian Church in another country, in resolving to appoint Commissioners for this purpose, must report their resolution to the Presbytery of the bounds, with whom it is competent to add to or otherwise alter the membership and powers of the Commission as may seem most expedient. If the minister who had received such an invitation resigns his charge and comes to the Colony, his settlement is proceeded with as if he were already a minister of this Church without a charge."

The Clerk of Assembly was instructed to intimate the adoption of this rule to the Home Churches, and also that the Assembly are desirous that no preacher commissioned to be sent to this Church should henceforth be ordained by any Home Church, but that he should come among us simply as a licentiate.

A series of resolutions were adopted bearing on the peculiar circumstances of the Scots Church, Collins-street. See Appendix (I).

The following table shows the income and expenditure of the various Standing Committees of the Assembly for the two financial years, 1882-3 and 1883-4, with the capital of those that had funds :—

Committees.	Income.		Expenditure.		Capital.
	1882-83.	1883-84.	1882-83.	1883-84.	
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1. Widows & Orphans' Fund	3,121 2 10	2,897 15 3	2,142 14 6	2,174 7 6	24,049 6 0
2. Infirm Ministers' Fund ..	1,626 2 3	1,565 6 5	591 18 3	584 4 4	14,336 19 11
3. Home Mission Fund ..	512 6 9	514 9 9	805 17 3	751 15 5	—
4. Heathen „ „ ..	3,410 17 4	2,782 0 6	2,371 6 11	2,914 10 8	—
5. Theological Hall Fund ..	920 5 0	1,031 13 0	1,014 6 9	1,599 11 9	14,336 11 9
6. Assembly Expenses ..	1,146 1 6	1,505 12 8	1,091 10 4	1,598 7 5	—

The following is a statement of the amount of the capital funds of the Church :—

Invested by the Board	£45,892 11 8
„ „ Theological Hall Committee ...	12,170 0 0
Held by the Wyselaskie Trustees	14,000 0 0
On Deposit in banks at the close of the financial year	1,223 11 5
In Current Account	6,096 12 1
	£79,382 15 2

The General Trustees who held the property and capital funds of the Church were—the Hon. James MacBain, M.L.C., the Hon. Francis Ormond, M.L.C., Robert Harper, Esq., M.L.A. ; James Richmond, Esq. ; Thomas J. Finlay, Esq.

With regard to the Loan Fund, it appeared that the new loans issued for ten years at 10 per cent., thereby repaying the capital at the end of that term, amounted to £1,325 ; while the loans at 5 per cent., leaving the capital to be repaid at any time, according to arrangement, amounted to £720—altogether, £2,045.

With reference to the Theological Hall, the new arrangement had begun. The two Professors—Rev. M. Macdonald and Rev. J. L. Rentoul, D.D.—had been duly inducted to their respective chairs on 25th March. On the following day the nineteenth session of the Hall was opened, and was closed on 22nd August. Notwithstanding the short time allowed the Professors for preparation, they were able to treat with some measure of fulness the four great departments committed to them, and to keep the students, fifteen in number, in profitable occupation during five hours of each day.

Events of the Year.—1885.

February.—The Rev. Martin Lewis, of Bournemouth, England, arrived in Melbourne in answer to a call, forwarded the previous November from the Toorak congregation, signed by one hundred and twenty-six members and eighty-four adherents. Correspondence had been opened up with the Presbytery of London, in order that the call might be dealt with according to the rules of the Church.

The result of proceedings, according to official report conveyed by telegram from London was, that the tie between Mr. Lewis and his former congregation had been dissolved. Accordingly the induction took effect at Toorak on the 27th inst.

Rev. S. Robinson obtained leave of absence for nine months, with the view of visiting Great Britain. Rev. W. G. Dixon, M.A., recently arrived, was engaged to supply his pulpit.

Mr. J. Home Robertson, B.A., student-missionary, was licensed by the Presbytery of Macedon, called to the charge of the Mia-Mia congregation and district, and in due course ordained and inducted.

The Ballaarat and the Melbourne Presbyteries protested against the French annexation of the New Hebrides Islands, and memorialised Her Gracious Majesty the Queen, praying for the protection of the inhabitants.

In accordance with the instructions of the General Assembly, the Melbourne Presbytery arranged to visit the Scots Church congregation, and use their best endeavours to bring the office-bearers and members into proper friendly relations to the Assembly, and into loyal conformity to the Laws of the Church. Accordingly the Presbytery held a meeting on the 10th with the Session, at 11.30 a.m., and again at 5 p.m.; with the Trustees at 4 p.m.; and with the congregation at 8 p.m. The Presbytery, at all the meetings, found it a hard matter to surmount the difficulties that were in the way of a cordial understanding. At the evening meeting with the congregation especially, when the crowded attendance and excitement prevailing made it impossible to distinguish between genuine members of the Church and strangers, the Presbytery found themselves under the necessity of withdrawing from the meeting, without being able to secure even a hearing of mutual explanations. One disturbing element in the whole case was the return of Rev. C. Strong to the Colony, and the desire on the part of some at least of the office-bearers to give him employment in connection with the mission work of the congregation, and even occasionally in the pulpit.

The Presbytery set themselves earnestly to the task of having the loyal distinguished from the disloyal members of the congregation; obtaining access to all the minute books of the church; seeing that the funds were expended in strict accordance with the Trust; having the pulpit supplied only through Presbyterial arrangement, and getting it permanently filled as soon as possible, and generally having the whole business of the congregation conducted in entire submission to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery and the Assembly.

March.—It was proposed to take steps towards originating a congregation in North Fitzroy.

April.—A mission station had been opened in East Richmond.

The engagement of Rev. G. Dods, to supply the pulpit of the Scots Church, terminated on the 12th.

Mr. F. Elliott, student, had been doing mission work in the Presbytery of Mortlake.

May.—The Melbourne Presbytery made appointments from among

their members to supply the pulpit of the Scots Church during the month of June.

June.—Similar appointments were made to supply the Scots Church pulpit for July.

Rev. J. M. Jenkins, a duly commissioned minister from the Presbyterian Church of America, arrived, and was cordially welcomed into connection with the Church.

Rev. Mr. Lyttle, from another denomination, had been received into connection for mission work, and was appointed to occupy a station in South Gippsland.

Steps had been taken to originate a cause in Armadale.

July.—The congregations of Whittlesea, Morang, and Janefield were formed into a regular charge.

A petition, signed by one hundred and sixty-five members and two hundred and thirty-seven adherents of the Scots Church, was presented to the Presbytery. The petition stated that the congregation were prepared to go forward to the election of a minister, and prayed the Presbytery to take the necessary steps for this end.

The Presbytery, however, had come to the conclusion that the congregation had not as yet sufficiently shown their loyalty to the Church. Therefore, the petition could not be granted.

Members of Presbytery were appointed to supply the pulpit for August.

A conference had been held on the State of Religion in the Melbourne Presbytery.

August.—It was proposed to take steps to begin religious services at Camberwell.

In the peculiar circumstances in which the congregation of the Scots Church was placed, the Presbytery made direct appointments for the pulpit during September.

Another memorial, signed by one hundred and sixty-two members and one hundred and thirty-seven adherents of the Scots Church, was presented to the Presbytery, expressing their loyalty to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and praying that the inhibition laid on the congregation might be removed, so that a meeting could be held for the election of a minister.

The membership, however, required to be more thoroughly sifted, inasmuch as it was believed that not a few were manifesting a divided allegiance between the Assembly and the party worshipping in the Temperance Hall, under the ministry of Rev. C. Strong. The further investigation was therefore committed to the "Committee on the Minutes of the Board of Management." A conference also, it was intended, should be held by the Presbytery with those who declared their loyalty to the Church on 3rd September in the Assembly Hall.

September.—Mr. Reuben Binstead was engaged to do mission work in the Church.

The report of the Conference with the Scots Church Memorialists set forth that the views of the Presbytery had been fully explained, and that the speakers among the petitioners considered that the

conditions imposed on the congregation were unnecessary and impracticable.

The Presbytery resolved to call a meeting of the congregation in order to set the conditions clearly before them, and to ascertain whether as a congregation they were prepared to comply with them. These conditions were substantially two—"that those who take part in the election be true and loyal members and adherents of the Church, and that they call a minister who shall teach in accordance with the Standards."

October.—Rev. Martin Lewis, Toorak, tendered the resignation of his charge on the ground of his wife's health. After the usual steps, Mr. Lewis was relieved on the 13th.

The Presbyterians of Warragul, Drouin, and Lardner were desirous of having a suitable labourer located among them, there being a prospect of the three congregations soon forming a full charge.

A site had been offered by Mr. Lloyd as a gift at Armadale for the erection of a Church.

Mrs. Rockford offered nine acres and a half of land at Gipsy Village for a Church and manse.

A motion was about to be submitted to the Legislative Assembly to open the Public Library, the Museum, and the National Gallery on the Lord's Day. The Presbyterians offered their usual decided opposition.

The revised roll of the Scots Church congregation was produced, showing two hundred and ninety-two communicants and three hundred and fifty-eight adherents.

The Melbourne Presbytery met with the congregation of the Scots Church on the 13th.

The conditions were explained which the Presbytery had laid down as essential to be fulfilled by the congregation before they could be allowed to proceed to call a minister.

The reply of the congregation was that they never intended to call a minister who was not prepared to conform to the laws of the Church; that the Presbytery were not warranted in supposing they might call a minister of unsound principles; that they claimed the common right of congregations to call any preacher or minister of the Presbyterian Church, whether of the Colony or of Great Britain; and that they had no connection with any other congregation not belonging to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and therefore there was no tie which required to be severed.

November.—The consideration of the Scots Church case, having been adjourned, was resumed. The Presbytery were disposed to remove the inhibition against the congregation meeting for any purpose except for public worship until they fulfilled the two conditions laid down. The meeting of the 13th was more orderly and peaceable than the one held in February. At the same time the resolution of the meeting was evasive. A distinction was drawn between "the laws" and "the Standards" of the Church. The Presbytery were charged with making the impossible assumption that the con-

gregation had joined some other congregation. The honesty of members of Presbytery in accepting the Standards was even impugned, and mental reservations were imputed to them. Liberty was virtually claimed for any minister to explain away the whole doctrine of the Confession. It was resolved, therefore, to refer the whole matter as it stood to the Assembly for advice as to further procedure.

The Rev. John M. Jenkins accepted a call from the North Williamstown congregation, and the induction was effected on the 23rd.

The congregation of the First Church, Dunedin, transmitted a call, signed by two hundred and fifty-two members and seventy-seven adherents, to Rev. James Gibb, Footscray. Mr. Gibb accepted the call, and was loosed from his charge on 1st December.

December.—The congregations of Whittlesea and Morang brought out a call in favour of Rev. F. T. Jenkin, who accepted, and the induction took place on the 15th.

Rev. Robert Scott, M.A., had resigned his charge of Chalmers Church congregation with the view of returning to Scotland, and was relieved on the 1st.

The Church Extension Committee recommended that religious services should be begun as soon as possible at Balaclava, also at Clifton Hill, at Mordialloc and Frankston, at Gipsy Village, at Jeetho and Bass, and at Warburton.

The congregation at Suva, Fiji, was received by the Assembly into the Church, and was placed on the roll of the Presbytery of Melbourne.

The Presbytery, in answer to a petition from the congregation of the Scots Church, agreed to authorise a meeting for calling a minister, but, in doing so, they instructed the Session to have the names of all persons known to be connected with the new congregation removed from the roll in terms of the Assembly's finding.

CHAPTER XV.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 5th May, 1885.

Rev. John Clark, Moderator.

Induction—Rev.	Henry Swan—Beechworth.
,,	,,	J. S. Drummond—Carnghan and Linton.
,,	,,	J. T. Robertson, M.A.—Hotham.
,,	,,	John Thomson—Kensington.
,,	,,	Martin Lewis—Toorak.
Ordination	,,	M. G. Hart—Maryborough.
,,	,,	H. J. Robertson, B.A.—Baynton, Mia-Mia, and Redesdale.
,,	,,	George Carson—Donnybrook and Wallan Wallan.
,,	,,	D. A. Cameron, M.A.—Donald.
Demission	,,	W. T. Whan, M.A.—Skipton and Stockyard Hill.
,,	,,	J. U. Taylor—Rochester and Corop.
,,	,,	V. M. Riordan – Chalmers Church, Sandhurst.
,,	,,	David Milne – Duneed and Connewarre.
,,	,,	L. M. Weir—North Williamstown.
,,	,,	James Groundwater—Moulamein and Balranald.
,,	,,	Wm. Mathew—Murchison and Dargalong.
,,	,,	J. B. Steel—Narracoorte.
,,	,,	J. S. Drummond—St. Arnaud.
,,	,,	J. A. Taylor—North-west Wimmera.

A telegram had been forwarded, through the Agent-General, to the Moderators of the Home Churches, requesting them to protest against the annexation of the New Hebrides by the French Government, and the request had been cordially complied with.

An important communication had been received by the Board of Finance and Investment from Mrs. Black, Mount Noorat, Western District, dated 1st May, 1885. The letter contained an offer to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria of the sum of one thousand pounds sterling, to be invested by the Church for the benefit of the Neil Black Memorial Church at Noorat. This benefaction would be bestowed under certain conditions. These were—1. "That the sittings should be free so long as the Presbytery judged proper. 2. That half of the annual income, from the investment of the £1,000, should be paid half-yearly or yearly, through the Board of Management of the Memorial Church at Noorat, to the clergyman who should be appointed by the Presbytery, with the consent of the congregation, to conduct the services in said Church, and should be in addition to the minimum stipend of £300. 3. The other half of the income, derived from the investment, to go towards keeping the Church, school, and grounds in good repair."

The Commission of Assembly cordially accepted the donation on the conditions specified, and returned to Mrs. Black the best thanks of the Church.

In reporting on the subject of Australian Union of Presbyterian

Churches, there was a general code of rules submitted. These had been prepared by Rev. Dr. Nish with elaborate care, in order to show that Union was practicable, and that the interests of Australian Presbyterianism would be effectively advanced by visible incorporation. There were, however, questions of administration, of discipline, of Standards, and especially of property, which were involved, and which required to be thoroughly scrutinised before the Church should be committed to actual Union, or even to Federation. The Presbyterian Church of Victoria could not make any change in her Standards without an Act of Parliament, and consequently were precluded from Union, but in so far as Federation was concerned on lines which should preserve the autonomy of the different Churches, and which would not involve practical incorporation, the movement could be safely, and ought to be vigorously, prosecuted. Accordingly, after the fullest consideration of all the issues involved, it was judged proper to make Federation rather than incorporation meanwhile the rallying word. The resolution adopted on this occasion was—"That the general code of rules framed by the various conferences held since 1882 be approved generally and sent down to Presbyteries and Sessions, with instructions to report thereon to the Clerk of Assembly not later than the 31st August, and that deputies, representatives of all the Presbyteries of the Church, be appointed to attend the next conference relative to Federation." This was proposed to be held in Melbourne during the month of September.

During last Assembly, the question was started, for consideration, whether there should be a celebration of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria Jubilee, now drawing nigh. And a Committee was appointed to discuss and mature the whole subject. Hence the report brought before the Commission, that the year 1888 should be regarded as the Jubilee year of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, the Rev. James Clow, who was the first Presbyterian minister in the Colony, having begun to preach the gospel in the infant town of Melbourne in the end of 1837. The Committee, therefore, recommended that an earnest effort should be made to raise, before the Assembly of 1888, a Jubilee Thanksgiving Fund of at least £60,000, and that one-third of the interest on the sum raised should be applied annually for the increase of the Sustentation Fund—one-third for Home Mission and Church Extension purposes—and one-third for the extinction of debt on Church buildings. They also recommended that an agent should be appointed by the Assembly for three years, whose duties should be (1) to raise the Jubilee Fund, and (2) to co-operate with Presbyteries and with the Home Mission Committee in superintending and directing the Home Mission work of the Church, and in raising funds for it. Further, they recommended that the salary of the agent should be £600 a year, exclusive of travelling expenses, and that steps be immediately taken to raise a Guarantee Fund for the salary for three years.

It was announced that the ex-Moderators had agreed to nominate the Rev. D. S. M'Eachran as the Moderator of next Assembly.

A conference was held on Sabbath-school work. It was resolved by the Commission to direct Presbyteries, Sessions, and ministers to take a closer and more effective oversight of the Sabbath-schools under their supervision, and to furnish the Committee on Sabbath-schools with fuller and more definite details of the work which is being carried on throughout the Church.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 9TH NOVEMBER, 1885.

REV. D. S. M'EACHRAN, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	W. T. Whan, M.A.—Belfast.
,,	,,	C. S. Ross—Skipton.
,,	,,	T. Neilson—Rochester.
,,	,,	V. M. Riordan—Narracoorte.
,,	,,	J. Groundwater—South Gippsland.
,,	,,	D. Milne—Yea.
Ordination	,,	C. Robertson—Barrabool.
,,	,,	J. G. Davies, B.A.—Allansford.
,,	,,	R. Johnston—Shepparton.
Demission	,,	M. Lewis—Toorak.
,,	,,	A. C. Smith—Daylesford.

A new and enlarged edition of the Rules and Forms was in course of preparation for the more efficient guidance of Church business. The resolution adopted was—"That the Committee be re-appointed with instructions to draw up a complete code, in accordance with the amendments contained in the report; that members of Assembly be directed to send suggestions to the Convener on or before the 30th inst; that the suggestions thus made, together with the motion by Mr. Harper, be considered by the Committee, and in so far as they meet with their approval, be inserted within brackets; that the code as thus issued be declared of interim authority, and sent down to Presbyteries and Sessions to be reported on to the Commission in May; and that the Commission be directed to consider the returns so forwarded and report thereanent to next Assembly, with the view of having the code declared by the Assembly as of permanent authority."

The suggestion of Mr. Harper referred to was—"That the portion of the code of rules submitted by the Committee, referring to the constitution of the Federal Assembly, and the promotion of federal action, be referred to a Committee, of which the Law Agent shall be Convener, with power to consult counsel, and with instructions to pay particular attention to the bearing of the proposed rules on the tenure of the property of this Church, and that their findings thereon be sent, along with the said rules, to the next Federal Council."

During the year it appeared that the Synod of Tasmania, at their meeting in Launceston, had unanimously approved of the proceedings of the last Conference relative to Federation, and had agreed to send down the code of rules to their Presbyteries and Sessions for correction or approval.

In connection with the report of the Committee on the Widows and Orphans' Fund, it appeared that there had been an actuarial investigation, from which there was found much cause for thankfulness. The inquiry had been conducted by Mr. M. A. Black, Actuary, Sydney, and it was resolved to convey to him their high sense of the value of his investigation and opinion. This year there had been an increase to the capital of £739 14s. 8d., making the whole amount £25,149 0s. 8d. There were one hundred and sixty-two ministers connected with the fund, and thirty-five widows who were annuitants. The progress of the fund during the twenty years of its history, from 1865 to 1885, may be seen from its financial state at each quinquennial period :—

In	1865	the	capital	was	...	£6,084
,,	1870	,,	,,	...	...	13,171
,,	1875	,,	,,	...	...	17,615
,,	1880	,,	,,	...	...	21,425
,,	1885	,,	,,	...	...	25,149

In the report respecting the Infirm Ministers' Fund, it was found that at least £1,200 would be added to the capital, making the total amount fully £15,000. This result indicated an increase of £5,000 during the preceding five years.

The increase in revenue during the same quinquennial period was the following :—The collections improved from £325 to £474; rates, from £150 to £255; the interest on capital, from £726 to £998.

In 1880 there were six beneficiaries, whose annuities amounted to £364. In 1885 there were eight beneficiaries, whose annuities amounted to £516. The fund was regarded as being in as healthy and prosperous a condition as it had been in any period of its past history.

The financial position of the Heathen Missions was not quite so jubilant as it had been the two preceding years. In 1883 the income had been £3,064; the expenditure, £2,194; in 1884, the income was £2,533; the expenditure, £2,680; in 1885 the income was £1,894; the expenditure, £2,349.

Rev. J. G. Paton had gone in the beginning of the year on a visit to Great Britain, in order to awaken an interest in the missions, and to collect money for the purchase of a new *Dayspring*, which should be a steamship, and to secure another missionary for the New Hebrides. He had already collected £7,000, besides paying all incidental expenses. It was proposed to give him a public reception on his return, and to present him with a cheque for £100.

With regard to the dreaded annexation of the New Hebrides by the French, the reply of the Imperial Government to the petition of the Church, praying that the islands might be taken under British protection, had been to the effect that "Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria promised to maintain the existing neutrality." A French Company, however, continued to buy up land in the islands, which, it was feared, would result in practical annexation by their Government.

The Missionary Synod had selected the Island of Mallicolo as the site of the "Amy Gertrude Russell" Mission Station, and had recommended that the additional missionary engaged by Mr. Paton should be located on this large territory.

Mr. Paton, on his return from Britain, was inclined to repair to the islands to labour among his converts, but the Committee were of opinion that he should be retained in the Colony in the interests of the mission in Australia.

The details of Mr. Paton's enterprise at Home were deeply interesting. About seventy letters sent him on one occasion from all quarters gave him £100. A London Episcopal minister at the close of a meeting gave him £100, and raised for him £70 more. An English stranger sent him a cheque for £300; a Scotch gentleman £200, and three ladies £100 each, while others sent sums varying from sixpenny stamps—even from a widow's twopence—up to £50, Sabbath-school teachers and children raised much by collecting cards.

He had engaged two Free Church divinity students—Messrs. T. W. Leggatt and W. Morton—for the New Hebrides Mission.

He had addressed the United Mildmay Conference, at which many of the nobility and wealthy Christian workers were present. The impression produced led to the holding of garden, lawn, and drawingroom meetings, to which he was invited in order to give addresses on missions. The result was that during a stay of five weeks in and about London there were returns in voluntary donations amounting to £1,100.

Rev. D. Macdonald's report from Efaté is full of details of hard work, and that in abundance, accompanied with a dread of French annexation. He held two candidates' classes at two places every week, with an attendance of over one hundred and thirty. During the year he had baptised one hundred and twenty-three persons—men, women, and children. A new Church had been built. It was free of debt, and, according to Sydney valuation, was worth at least £500. The native teachers were carrying on their work with varied success. The Efaté converts had made 2,000 lbs. of arrowroot, which were sent to Melbourne for sale. The Mai converts had made about 600 lbs. The converts in these two places numbered about five hundred, the total number of the population being about nine hundred and eighty.

In the midst of all the toil, there was much sickness in his family, occasioning no small anxiety. To crown all, he had been engaged in a controversy with the French Trading Company as to the Protestant Church land, of which he was Trustee.

There was nothing new to note in the circumstances of the aborigines. At Ramahyuck there were three births, one marriage, and no deaths during the year. A tour to Queensland in the interests of the aborigines of that Colony was undertaken by the missionary, Rev. F. A. Hagenauer, and it was hoped that good would result.

A new Chinese Mission Station was formed at Bairnsdale. The

three Chinese who had completed their three years' course of study had been set to work. There were now seven agents on the staff of mission workers among a Chinese population of about two thousand two hundred. There was a total attendance of about one hundred and eighty at the Sabbath services, and it was believed there were over thirty converts.

Matters in reference to the congregation of the Scots Church were not yet in a settled condition. The vacant pulpit required to be efficiently supplied, and, as soon as possible, to be permanently filled by a suitable pastor. Mr. Strong, having returned to the Colony, was establishing a new congregation under the name of the Australian Church. Many of the old members of the congregation were unsettled, and had their attachments divided between the old and the new. It became the business of the Presbytery in connection with the Session to get the roll of membership revised, and cleared of all who might have decidedly left the old congregation, and had joined the other, which, judging from the name and the whole surroundings, had no distinctive Presbyterian character, and which put forth no profession of being based on what was generally understood as evangelical and orthodox doctrine. There seemed to be rather an ignoring, if not an abjuring, of this.

The Melbourne Presbytery, in the difficulties of the case, brought the matter before the Assembly, in order to know the mind of the whole Church. After much and earnest discussion, the motion, which secured a large majority, was the following:—"The Assembly direct that, previous to any voting about a call, the Presbytery shall take care that the names of all persons known to be connected with the new congregation be removed from the roll of the Scots Church; declare that none can claim rights as members or adherents in any congregation who will not submit to the laws of the Church, as to both doctrine and discipline, and that no attempt to alter these laws can be permitted, except in the way provided by the constitution of the Church, and instruct the Presbytery to see to it, that the congregation understand and acquiesce in this, previous to the moderation in a call; declare that no mental reservations are allowed to office-bearers in signifying their adherence to the Standards. Some points, as to which difference of opinion has been expressed, and may be permitted, are specified in the Formula and in the Declaratory Statement, approved by the General Assembly of 1882; and the Church has never seen it to be her duty to enforce every minor detail, but she must always hold her ministers and elders bound by the Standards, taken in their ordinary sense, and the Assembly now, in view of present circumstances and of the unsettlement of opinion prevailing in the community, enjoin on the Presbytery of Melbourne and all Presbyteries to make sure that all persons licensed, ordained, or inducted do *thus* accept the Standards, and especially that they accept the great scriptural truth of the Deity of the Lord Jesus, His propitiatory sacrifice, and real resurrection from the dead; and that they be careful to inquire and satisfy themselves on

these points before recommending any candidate for license, or sustaining any call."

The vote was carried by 109 to 37.

With regard to the Jubilee Fund, the Assembly approved the report that was presented to the Commission, leaving out the part which referred to the Guarantee Fund. After further consideration, it was unanimously agreed that the Moderator for this year be appointed to take charge of the Jubilee Fund during his term of office, and that he be furnished with such assistance in his pastoral work as will set him free to do whatever he may find necessary for the work of this appointment, and that all expenses incurred or authorised by him form a first charge on the Jubilee Fund.

The Scotch College continued to maintain its high position and reputation. During the past year thirty-seven boys had passed the Matriculation Examination, and in the higher examination for honours they secured fifteen places. Of the twelve boys in all who took honours in Classics, six were from the Scotch College. Of the nine in English History, four were from the College; and of twelve in mathematics, five were from the College.

In the honour examinations, in addition to those gained at matriculation, "the College had gained one first-class, four second-classes, and five third-classes, and the Exhibition for Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. During the year two former students had been admitted as solicitors, five had been called to the bar, and twenty-one degrees had been conferred on old collegians. The total list already reached the goodly number of one hundred and forty-four, being the largest ever published by the college, against one hundred and ten in 1883, and eighty-three in 1882."

The year which had just closed on the Ladies' College was the most successful of any. The house had been almost continuously full. The number of day pupils showed an increase. The amount of percentage due for the financial year would be nearly £500 in excess of the charges which the Trustees had to defray.

At the matriculation examination, the high standard set by the pupils in previous years had been more than maintained. They gained seven first-class out of a total of twenty-seven—one in classics, two in mathematics, one in English and history, and three in modern languages—when no other school, whether for girls or boys, had gained more than three. The total number who passed the matriculation examination was twenty-seven. The honour of gaining the Exhibition for French and German had, for the fifth year in succession, fallen to the Ladies' College.

The financial position was satisfactory. The building of the Wyselaskie Hall would be begun in a short time, while the erection of the central part of the College was under consideration.

The contract for the building of the new wing of the Ormond College, including the Master's private residence, had been completed. The accommodation for resident students would be greatly increased. The new erection would involve an outlay of about £14,000, all of which would be paid by Mr. Ormond.

The number of students on the books of the College had increased by 50 per cent. All the rooms for resident students had been occupied during the year.

Three students of the College had gained first-class and second-class honours in mental and moral philosophy and in engineering, and other eight had distinguished themselves in gaining exhibitions and honours.

In the execution of the Wyselaskie bequest, it was resolved—"To erect a separate building in connection with the Theological Hall with the funds at the disposal of the Council from this bequest, the building to contain a Lecture Hall in the centre, with two residences for the Theological Professors placed one on each side." The building was expected to cost about £8,500.

The number of students on the roll of the Theological Hall had been fifteen. The session was lengthened by order of Assembly from four and a half months to six, and it was made a Rule that it should commence on the last Tuesday of March, and close on the first Tuesday of October.

It was proposed that, in regard to non-graduated students, a four-year course should be enacted. There were seven scholarships connected with education for the ministry, three of which required residence in Ormond College. Two of these were £25, one £30, and the rest £50.

It was resolved that annual invitations to prayer should be issued to all ministers on behalf of the Hall. The General Assembly were impressed with the thought that all that had been accomplished in the past—including Mr. Ormond's splendid gift, the accumulation of the Endowment Fund, the foundation of scholarships, the establishment of two permanent chairs, and the training of over forty ministers now at work in the Church—all put together, are but a beginning of that great work which must go on growing if it is to go on living. There will be required additional scholarships, a well replenished Theological library, two more chairs of Theology, and, what is of pre-eminent importance, a steady and full supply of students.

The Assembly were gratified at the satisfactory nature of the Professor's report, and at the large amount of work which they had been able to overtake during the session.

The Assembly instructed the Committee on the State of Religion to continue their watchful care over the claims of the Sabbath, to use their best efforts to promote a pure morality within the bounds of the Church, to urge Conferences of Presbyteries for fostering spiritual life, and to promote evangelistic efforts by ministers and congregations. Further, the Assembly, impressed with the importance of the visitation of congregations, urged upon Presbyteries to set about this special work without delay, and adopt measures for carrying it into effect, in regard to the entire Church within the next three years.

A deputation from the Wesleyan Conference was introduced to the Assembly, consisting of Rev. R. C. Flockhart, President of the

Conference, Rev. H. Bath, and Rev. J. Watsford, all of whom gave interesting addresses.

The Assembly listened with sincere pleasure to the representatives of the Wesleyan Church, who brought with them fraternal greetings. The Assembly heartily reciprocated the feeling of kindness, love, and Christian brotherhood which the deputation had expressed, and thanking them for their constant helpfulness in the common struggle of the Christian faith, the Assembly hoped that they would both continue, in ever-increasing zeal, to work together in the unity of the spirit and in the bond of peace for the hope of the gospel.

It was agreed that Rev. J. H. Shallberg should be admitted as a minister of this Church in full standing.

On the important subject of Federation, the formulated basis of federation adopted by the Conference held in the previous September was approved. After discussion on the 8th clause of the basis of Federation, bearing on the Standard of Theological Education for students, it was unanimously agreed "to approve of clause 8, on the understanding that it commits us simply to declaring the importance of aiming to secure a uniform standard of attainment by our students, in connection with both the entrance and the exit examination, and the instituting of a Central Board of Examination as the best means of reaching such a standard, and that all details relative to the operations of the Board are left to be reviewed in the Federal Assembly, and after being considered there, are to be sent down to Presbyteries and Sessions to be reported on to the second Federal Assembly, before any practical action is to be taken in the way of altering the present arrangements in regard to our students."

Besides this, a resolution was adopted approving of the recommendation of the Conference, that the first meeting of the Federal Assembly should be held in St. Stephen's Church, Sydney, on the second Wednesday of July, 1886, and also of the mode of electing the first Moderator of that Assembly. Accordingly, Presbyteries were instructed to make their nominations in due time, and to elect their representatives, and to report thereon to the Convener of the Committee on the rules and forms, together with any suggestions which they may have to make, relative to the general code.

The subject of the private dispensation of the Lord's Supper was brought, by overture, under discussion in the Assembly. It was finally considered sufficient "to declare that ministers, with the authority of their Sessions, are free to exercise a discretionary power in regard to the matter, it being distinctly understood that the Session will arrange to be present, as far as practicable, whenever the ordinance is so dispensed, and that all such action on the part of Sessions are to be inserted in their records."

Rev. J. Megaw, A. Adam, M.A., and J. K. M'Millan, B.A., as deputies to the General Council held in Belfast, gave a report of the manner in which they had fulfilled their commission.

Rev. J. Lyall, who had been commissioned by the Presbytery of South Australia to convey their fraternal greetings to this Church, addressed the Assembly in earnest and stirring terms, was cordially

thanked, and was asked to assure his brethren of the warm and ever-growing interest of this Church in the success of their work.

The annual examinations in connection with the Higher Christian Education Scheme were held at the end of September. A decrease had taken place in the number of competitors. Last year two hundred and sixteen were examined. This year upwards of two hundred sent in their names, but only one hundred and forty-nine presented themselves. The falling off was partly accounted for by the length and difficulty of the senior text book. The competitors had been fairly distributed over the country, the examination being held at eighteen different places. The general result of the examination was very good, inasmuch as nearly three-fourths of the competitors had passed. The scriptural subject was again the favourite, the Shorter Catechism, from some cause, not being so acceptable.

In the senior section, four took prizes, seven passed with credit, and eight passed, there being twenty-three competitors. In the junior section, ten took prizes, sixteen passed with credit, fifteen passed, there being seventy-four competitors.

In the examination on the Shorter Catechism, senior, one took a prize, three passed; six competitors. In the junior section, eleven took prizes, thirteen passed with credit, thirteen passed; forty-one competitors.

Events of the Year.—1886.

February.—The decease of Rev. John Cooper, of Coburg, was announced.*

March.—Rev. John M'Connell was separated from his charge at Ballaarat, with the view of his becoming temporary assistant minister of St. Andrew's, Carlton.

A call issued from the congregation of the Scots Church in favour of Rev. George Dods, M.A., B.D.

Rev. J. M'Laren resigned his charge of the Napier-street congregation, Fitzroy, and was released on the 11th.

Rev. G. D. Buchanan received a call from St. Andrew's Kirk, Ballaarat, but decided to remain in his present charge.

Steps were taken at Ballaarat with a view to commemorate the Jubilee of Rev. R. T. Walker, M.A., late minister of Ebenezer.

Rev. J. G. Paton went on a visit to the New Hebrides Islands, intending to be present at the Mission Synod there, and purposing to return in time to attend the first meeting of the Federal Council in Sydney.

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* Memorial Minute.

The Melbourne Presbytery testified that Mr. Cooper had been nearly twenty years a minister of Coburg; that his genial disposition endeared him to his brethren; that he was a devoted pastor, sympathising with his people's sorrows and sharing in their joys; that he took the deepest interest in the moral and spiritual welfare of the prisoners in Pentridge; that as a preacher he was evangelical, earnest, and thoughtful; and that as a writer he stood high with the intellectual and thoughtful whom he addressed.

The Melbourne Presbytery were earnestly engaged this month, and during a considerable time after, investigating the complaint brought against the teaching in the pulpit of Rev. George Dods by Dr. Morrison.

The whole case would come up in all likelihood before the Assembly in November by resolution of the Presbytery.

April.—A deputation of Presbyterians, by arrangement, waited on the Premier to protest against the Imperial Government conceding to France the right to annex the New Hebrides.

May.—Rev. J. M'Connell received and accepted a call from the Footscray congregation. His induction was effected on 31st.

There were seven ministers and seven members of the Church nominated to represent the Presbytery at the forthcoming meeting of the first Federal Council, to be held in Sydney.

Various propositions were made in the Melbourne Presbytery with a view to concluding the vexed case of Rev. Mr. Dods. It was at length decided that, inasmuch as there appeared to be some ambiguity in the rules and forms as to what constitutes an accusation of unsound doctrine, and as to the precise point at which the Presbytery is entitled to order the production of MSS., the case as it now stands be referred to the General Assembly.

June.—The newly-formed congregations at Camberwell and Burwood gave a call to Rev. James Climie. The induction took place on the 14th.

A call from Coburg congregation to Rev. William Gray Dixon, M.A., was declined.

A site had been purchased in Glenferrie-road for the congregation to be formed at Armadale.

Rev. J. A. Stuart resigned his charge of the Simpson's-road congregation, and was released on 6th July.

July.—Presbyterians at Clifton Hill took steps to obtain supply of religious service.

Messrs. T. W. Leggatt and A. Morton, missionaries, arrived from Scotland on their way to the New Hebrides.

Rev. G. M. Connor resigned his charge at Golden-square and was relieved. He was engaged as an assistant to Rev. A. M'Vean, Brunswick.

August.—A call from Toorak congregation had issued in May on behalf of Rev. John F. Ewing, M.A., of the Free West Church, Glasgow. Correspondence had been entered into with the Free Church Glasgow Presbytery. Mr. Ewing was in due course separated from his Church at Home, arrived safe in Melbourne, and was inducted on the 19th.

Cheltenham congregation, so long connected with Brighton, was separated, in order to form a united charge with Mentone and Mordialloc.

Messrs. Leggatt and Morton, missionaries, were ordained in the Scots Church on the 17th.

Rev. S. G. M'Laren accepted a call from Coburg, and was inducted on 2nd September.

September.—The congregation of Chalmers Church gave a call to Rev. J. Virtue M'Nair, signed by one hundred and thirty-five members and thirty-nine adherents. The induction was effected on the 28th.

October.—The decease was announced of Rev. J. M. Innes, of Bacchus Marsh.*

November.—It was ascertained that the number of Sabbath-schools in the Church amounted to sixty, with eight thousand four hundred and seventy-seven scholars, and nine hundred and thirty-eight teachers, six schools having been added during the year. The average attendance was about seventy per cent. of the numbers on the roll. Ninety-five scholars had become communicants. Nineteen congregations were provided with separate buildings for Sabbath-school purposes. Six hundred pounds had been raised in the schools for missions to the heathen, and the Shorter Catechism was taught in all of them.

December.—A call emanated from Cheltenham, Mentone, and Mordialloc in favour of Mr. R. M. Fergus, M.A. The call was accepted, and the ordination and induction took place on 6th January.

Messrs. John Matthew, M.A., and Alexander M'Neilage were licensed to preach the gospel.

The honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity had been conferred on Professor Murdoch Macdonald by the faculty of Rutgers's College, United States of America.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 4TH MAY, 1886.

REV. D. S. M'EACHRAN, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	J. M. Jenkins—North Williamstown.
,,	,,	R. Vance, M.A.—St. Arnaud.
,,	,,	F. T. Jenkin—Whittlesea.
Translation	,,	James Gibb—First Church, Dunedin, New Zealand.
Ordination	,,	J. H. Potter—West Sandhurst.
,,	,,	J. H. Shallberg—Kerang and Durham Ox.
Demission	,,	R. Scott, M.A.—Chalmers Church, Melbourne.
,,	,,	W. S. Login—Sale.
,,	,,	J. Steele—Bellarine.
,,	,,	J. M'Connell—Scots Church, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	John Cameron—Rupanyup.
,,	,,	J. M'Laren—Fitzroy.
Death	,,	John Cooper—Coburg.

A highly encouraging report was submitted concerning the Jubilee Fund. The Moderator had set himself to work vigorously

* MEMORIAL NOTICE.

He had just returned from a trip to Western Australia for his health. He purposed resuming pulpit duty on the very day of his decease. Mr. Innes had done good service in Western Australia and in New South Wales, and was well known and much respected as an earnest and evangelical preacher, and as diligent and faithful in the discharge of pastoral work.

and hopefully on behalf of the important scheme. Other denominations had started before the Presbyterians on a similar enterprise, and had manifested an honourable and successful zeal in raising a large Thanksgiving Fund in honour of the God of all grace and goodness. This was a plan which was based on scripture precedent, and was well fitted to bring honour to the great Author of salvation. The fiftieth year was a notable era in the history of Israel. Slaves were set free, debts were remitted, mortgages were released. The first Presbyterian service in the Colony was conducted by Rev. James Clow, retired chaplain of the Honourable East India Company, on the last Sabbath of 1837, and then, in the beginning of 1838, Rev. James Forbes prosecuted regular pulpit work. The Jubilee of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, therefore, must be complete in 1888.

In consideration of the marvellous blessings which the Great Head of the Church had showered upon Presbyterians, both as a Christian denomination and as individuals, during the period of fifty years, the General Assembly had resolved to celebrate the event by inviting all the members and adherents of the Church to join in raising a Jubilee Fund of £60,000, as an expression of thanks and praise to the God of redemption.

Then the interest of the fund would, under the divine blessing, be of immense benefit in the future in the extension of the Church, the strengthening of weak congregations, and, as a consequence, the better support of the struggling and laborious ministry. During the last six months, the work of collection had been prosecuted with much zeal and perseverance, and the result had been exceedingly encouraging. Definite promises of subscriptions had been received from thirty-five ladies and gentlemen, amounting in all to £10,456, while twenty others had promised to give without stating the amount. It might be safely affirmed that up to date the sum that could be relied on would not be less than £15,000.

In proof of the prompt and generous spirit with which the Assembly's scheme had been received, four gentlemen had contributed £1,000 each, then seven gentlemen were found to give £500 each. Three gentlemen gave £300 each, one £200, and seven gave £150 each. Nine gave £100 each, two £75, four £50. One gave £30, another £25, a third £5, and another £1.

The Assembly could not but record their gratitude to God for the liberal way in which so many of the wealthier friends of the Church had responded to the appeal made to them in behalf of the Jubilee Thanksgiving Fund, and express the hope that many more will be stirred up to follow their example, looking with confidence to the ministers and office-bearers of the Church for their hearty co-operation.

It was agreed by the ex-Moderators to recommend that Rev. J. G. Paton should be the Moderator of next Assembly.

An important communication came before the Commission from the Board of Investment and Finance. They had received notice from Mr. A. S. Park, the sole surviving trustee under the will of

the late Mr. Robert Allan, Buninyong, concerning a bequest which was made to the Church on certain conditions that were specified. The Board recommended the Commission to authorise them to accept the Allan bequest, and to pledge the Church to carry out the conditions of the will. It was also suggested that the Commission should appoint a special Committee to consider and determine how the conditions of the will could be best carried out.

Mr. Allan had died on the 15th March, 1878, leaving his property to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, for the religious instruction of the young, subject to a few legacies, and to a life interest for a brother and two sisters, who were deceased. The estate was valued at £10,400, and the surviving executor offered it to the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, subject to the conditions prescribed in the will.

The conditions of the will were not very easy of fulfilment. They were somewhat complicated. The funds were to be under the management of the general Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. There was allowed for the management of the funds not more than 2½ per cent. on the interest. Of the capital £3,500 were to be sunk for three boys' scholarships, each boy's scholarship amounting to £50; £1,800 were to be sunk for three scholarships for girls, each of these amounting to £25. An inspector of the whole Sabbath-school system should, if possible, be appointed, whose duty would be to travel from place to place, to lecture, to inspect, to assist in improving the scheme of lessons, and to be thoroughly experienced in Sabbath-school work.

A specimen syllabus is also furnished in the will of a two-years' course of lessons in scripture doctrines and duties, the whole period being divided into sections of six months. The entire system was designed to secure that the children in the Sabbath-schools of the Church should be thoroughly grounded in the knowledge of divine truth, and should have their characters for life moulded according to the requirements of scripture precept. The Shorter Catechism was to hold a prominent place in the system taught.

The Commission declared it to be their opinion that there was no insurmountable difficulty in carrying out the conditions annexed to the bequest, and therefore authorised the Board of Finance to accept the bequest in accordance with the conditions of the will.

The Presbytery of Murrumbidgee was found to be in a very anomalous position, being wholly situated within the boundary of New South Wales. The Churches and manses of the various congregations had been built on land granted by the Government in Sydney, while at the same time the ministers, sessions, and congregations were all subject to the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. This peculiar position led to an earnest desire on the part of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales to have the Presbytery of Murrumbidgee separated from its existing connection, and united to the Church of the Colony, within whose territory the Presbytery lay. With the efforts that were being put forth to draw closer the bonds of brotherhood and Union between

the two Churches, the Victorian Assembly did not require very strong persuasion to induce them to yield to the request of the neighbouring Church. Accordingly, after earnest consideration of the question, the Commission resolved—"That the ministers and congregations of the Presbytery of Murrumbidgee be disjoined from this Assembly, and placed under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly in New South Wales—with the exception of the minister and congregation at Hay, who are to remain in connection with the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and to be placed under the charge of the Presbytery of Castlemaine until the termination of Rev. S. A. Hamilton's pastorate in Hay."

The general community had been much impressed with the serious results of continued drought. The Commission "resolved to make the descent of rain a subject of special prayer, in the morning devotions before commencing business, and to issue instructions to all the ministers and preachers of the Church to make special supplication for rain in their respective congregations on Sabbath following."

In regard to temperance, it was resolved—"That the Commission approve the formation of a Total Abstinence Society, that ministers and office-bearers be recommended to adopt the practice of total abstinence, and that Presbyteries and Sessions be urged to do what they can within their several spheres to discourage the use of intoxicating drinks."

The periodical styled *The Messenger*, which was published monthly as the organ of the Church, entered on a new career. It presented a greatly improved appearance. It was much enlarged, and both the matter and the external aspect were exceedingly creditable. The Commission therefore gave forth a special deliverance on the subject—"Instructed ministers to use increased diligence in promoting the circulation of *The Messenger*, directed the Committee to have all advertisements removed from the title-page; authorised the raising of subscriptions for providing such a subsidy as might be found useful to give a proper start to the new enterprise, and recorded their high appreciation of the manner in which the editor (Rev. James Ballantyne) and the publisher have respectively fulfilled their part in preparing and issuing a periodical which is so creditable to the Church."

In reference to the dreaded usurpation by the French of the full control of the New Hebrides Isles, "the Commission cordially approved of the action taken by the Heathen Missions Committee, the Presbytery of Melbourne, and other Presbyteries, in protesting against the proposed annexation of the New Hebrides by France, and expressed hearty appreciation of the resolute stand taken by the Government of Victoria in this matter."

CHAPTER XVI.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 9TH NOVEMBER, 1886.

REV. J. G. PATON, MODERATOR.

Translation	—Rev.	D. S. Brunton—Chalmers Church, Launceston, Tasmania.
,,	,,	J. J. Spalding, B.A.—Warracknabeal.
,,	,,	C. F. Howe—Daylesford.
Induction	,,	J. M'Connell—Footscray.
,,	,,	J. Climie—Camberwell.
,,	,,	J. F. Ewing, M.A.—Toorak.
,,	,,	S. G. M'Laren—Coburg.
,,	,,	J. V. M'Nair—Chalmers Church.
,,	,,	T. S. Millar, B.A., B.Sc.—Scots Church, Ballaarat.
,,	,,	G. M. Connor—Sale.
,,	,,	W. Strachan—Rupanyup, Murtoa, &c.
Demission	,,	J. A. Stuart—Simpson's-road.
Disjunction	,,	*W. M. Mackie—Deniliquin.
,,	,,	*J. Dykes—Jerilderie.
,,	,,	*G. W. Adam—Urana.
,,	,,	*R. J. Smith—Wentworth.
,,	,,	*J. Henry—Albury.
Death	,,	J. M. Innes—Bacchus Marsh.

THE report of the Heathen Missions Committee was somewhat jubilant this year. Rev. J. G. Paton had collected at Home for a new mission ship, of either full or auxiliary steam power, the total sum of £8,772 12s. 7d., besides paying all expenses. Mr. Paton had also visited Queensland, at the request of the Federal Assembly, to inquire into the practicability of mission work among the Kanakas and aborigines in that Colony. It was agreed to employ him as agent for the missions of the Church.

The two new missionaries, Rev. Thomas Watt Leggatt and Rev. Alexander Morton, with their wives, sailed in the *Dayspring* on 18th October for Mallicolo, Mr. Leggatt being the "Amy Gertude Russell" missionary.

One great peril threatened the Mission in the New Hebrides. The French had landed soldiers and formed military posts at Mallicolo and Havannah Harbour. A large deputation waited on the Premier, protested against the action of the French, and prayed for British protection for the missionaries and their stations. Both the Colonial and the Imperial Governments were earnest in their endeavours to undo the violation of treaties, insuring the neutrality of the islands, and protecting British interests.

Meanwhile the mission work prospered apace. Seventy-four persons had been baptised at Mele Station, Fila Harbour, of whom upwards of fifty were adults; fifty-three were admitted to the communion; four had been suspended, one excommunicated, and

* These ministers and their congregations were disjoined from the Assembly and placed under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of New South Wales, in accordance with a resolution adopted at the Commission in May.

fourteen died. Thirty-three marriages had been celebrated. There were two hundred and nineteen Church members in good standing. Besides these, there were upwards of four hundred Christian people on Efaté, and one hundred and eighty on Mai. The native teachers contributed £10 to the Bible Society, London, as a thank-offering. The whole Bible in Efatése would be ready this year.

It was recommended that £6,000 of the money collected at Home should be expended in purchasing a mission ship, with steam auxiliary power, and the remaining £2,772 12s. 7d. should be used for the support of new missionaries.

The Chinese Mission was being carried on with vigour and encouraging success.

One of the aborigines had passed away in peace and hope, after twenty-two years of consistent and earnest Christian life.

The Assembly authorised the Committee to use their utmost efforts to resist, in the name of this Church, the occupation or annexation of the New Hebrides Islands by the French.

Another of the famous ecclesiastical causes came before this Assembly. It has been known as the Dods' case. Rev. George Dods, M.A., B.D., had been the assistant of Rev. Charles Strong in the Scots Church. He was ordained at Home immediately before his leaving, with the view of assuming that office. After Mr. Strong's separation from the Collins-street congregation, Mr. Dods continued to officiate under a limited engagement. At length the people of the Scots Church decided on making choice of a pastor. The Presbytery appointed one of their number to preside at the meeting of the congregation held for the election. The call was nearly unanimous in favour of Rev. George Dods, and was signed by one hundred and seventy-nine members and one hundred and forty-two adherents. We must detail the Presbytery's proceedings.

It was reported to the Presbytery, 2nd March, by the Moderator, *pro tem.*, who presided at the election, that a complaint and appeal had been taken against the call and settlement of Mr. Dods. It was resolved by the Presbytery, after hearing the Commissioners in support of the call, and also Dr. Morrison, the appellant, against its validity, to adjourn consideration of the case for a week. At the adjourned meeting, and after discussion, the resolution adopted was—"That the Presbytery, having heard the Commissioners and the appellant, find, in so far as this complaint seems to charge the minister called with unsound and defective teaching, it will require further consideration, and may involve lengthened inquiry; but as to the other parts of the complaint, and, considering all the circumstances, especially that the minister called has been intimately connected with the rebellion against the doctrine and discipline of the Church, in which the majority of the congregation were lately engaged, that a considerable minority have not subscribed the call, and that there is no reasonable prospect of the peace and prosperity of the Church being promoted by sustaining it, the Presbytery are satisfied that it is unadvisable to proceed to a settlement under the call, and do not sustain it."

Against this decision an appeal to the Assembly was taken.

It was also resolved, at the meeting of Presbytery, 10th March, to proceed to the investigation of the third ground of Dr. Morrison's appeal on 23rd inst., and that notice of this be given to Mr. Dods.

At the meeting of the 23rd, brethren were appointed to confer with Mr. Dods, and also to confer with Dr. Morrison. After these conferences it was reported that Mr. Dods had no objection to the matter being investigated; that he claimed to be held meanwhile as innocent; that Dr. Morrison had brought forward no charges but what were negative; that he denied those charges and held that he taught the doctrines referred to in Dr. Morrison's statement, and that he declined to be held responsible for the assertions or the actions of others; also that Dr. Morrison declared, if required, he was prepared to furnish evidence which would bear out his statements as to the scope and tendency of Mr. Dods' teaching, but that he declined to do so until he was cited by the Presbytery.

In these circumstances it was agreed that there was necessity for inquiry, and that Dr. Morrison should be cited to appear at an adjourned meeting next day for the purpose of prosecuting the investigation, and hearing the grounds of his statement with respect to Mr. Dods' teaching.

At the adjourned meeting it was agreed to record Dr. Morrison's statements. These were as follows:—"I consider Mr. Dods' teaching vague, negative, and unsatisfactory.

1. "From Mr. Dods' preaching, sin, in the sense in which it is used in the Scriptures and in the Confession, is absent, and hence the necessity for regeneration, and the work of the Holy Spirit, find no place in it. Indeed, the personality of the Holy Spirit is ignored. So far as I have heard from Mr. Dods we might truly say with the Ephesians to Paul, 'we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost,' except it be in the 'Glory be to the Father and to the Son,' &c., &c.—a formula which is apparently made to do duty for the declaration of more than one of our leading Christian doctrines.

2. "The true Deity and Divinity of our Lord are not, so far as I have heard, distinctly and unequivocally taught by Mr. Dods. On the contrary, in Mr. Dods' teaching, our Lord holds the same place as other great teachers, and is classed with such names as Moses and Paul, Luther and Calvin, Carlyle and Emerson.

3. "From Mr. Dods' teaching, the doctrine of the Atonement, as laid down in our Standards, is eliminated; and our Lord's literal resurrection, if taught at all, is taught vaguely, unsatisfactorily, and equivocally.

4. "Notwithstanding the numerous passages in the Scriptures where we are encouraged to ask in prayer, in the name of Christ, I have not, so far as I recollect, heard a prayer from Mr. Dods presented in the name of the Lord Jesus.

"In a word, I feel constrained to assert that the whole tendency of Mr. Dods' teaching is destructive and rationalistic, calculated to undermine the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and to obscure the

supernatural and miraculous in religion. In support of these allegations, I am prepared, should the Presbytery require it, to refer to what I believe will fully bear out and justify my estimate of the general scope and tendency of Mr. Dods' teaching."

In justification of his estimate of the character of Mr. Dods' teaching, Dr. Morrison referred to thirteen sermons which Mr. Dods had preached in March, April, May, June, September, October, November, 1884, mentioning the texts.

The motion adopted, as the result of the inquiry, was—"That having heard Dr. Morrison's statement, the Presbytery find that the defective teaching of which it complains is in respect to the great essential truths of our Christian faith, and that it refers to certain sermons preached in the Scots Church by Mr. Dods as proof that Dr. Morrison's impressions were correct; the Presbytery, therefore, call for the production of these sermons, and all others preached in the Scots Church by Mr. Dods between March, 1884, and June, 1885, and appoint a Committee to receive and examine them."

On 6th April a letter was read to the Presbytery from Mr. Dods, in which he respectfully declined to comply with the call of the Presbytery, to place in the hands of the Clerk the sermons preached by him in the Scots Church between March, 1884, and June, 1885.

It was again agreed—"That the Presbytery, having resolved to institute inquiry into the matter raised by the statements of Dr. Morrison, and not having as yet fixed the time at which Mr. Dods' defence should be received, now allow him until Tuesday, 20th April, at 2 p.m., at which time the Presbytery will meet to further consider the case."

On 20th April a letter was read from Mr. Dods, respectfully declining to comply with the request of the Presbytery to hand over his sermons to a Committee for examination, and stating that he held such declinature to be within his constitutional rights at the present stage of the proceedings.

It was then resolved—"That Mr. Dods be called upon, for the third and last time, to submit to the inspection of the Presbytery the MSS. of sermons preached by him, in the Scots Church, between March, 1884, and June, 1885, and to place them in the hands of the Clerk by 10 o'clock on Friday morning; and, further, that a Committee be appointed to confer with Mr. Dods as to the perilous position he occupied, in refusing to comply with the request of the Presbytery."

On 25th May the Committee appointed to confer with Mr. Dods reported that he had absolutely refused to hand over the MSS. of his sermons. Meanwhile it was agreed, as a matter of favour, that he be allowed the opportunity of being heard. Mr. Dods was heard accordingly.

The Presbytery then resolved—That they were now reluctantly compelled to declare Mr. Dods guilty of contumacy.

The letter from Mr. Dods, finally refusing to surrender the MSS., contained also a defence against the charges contained in the state-

ment of Dr. Morrison, but the defence was a matter which fell to be considered afterwards.

At this stage the whole proceedings terminated in the Presbytery, till the superior Court should hear the case by appeal.

The General Assembly, having heard the appellant and the defence of the Presbytery, decided to dismiss the appeal. The vote stood seventy-one to twenty-six.

A second appeal was heard by the Assembly in reference to the case of Mr. Dods, and the decision was carried—That the appeal be dismissed.

The Rev. Thomas Robinson Cairns, of Sydenham, Christchurch, Moderator of the General Assembly of New Zealand, was welcomed as a Commissioner appointed to convey the fraternal greetings of the brethren of the sister church. He addressed the Assembly, and received grateful acknowledgments.

The report of the Jubilee Fund Committee was of a highly encouraging character. Mr. Robert Harper, M.L.A., and the Hon. Francis Ormond, M.L.C., had each promised £1,000. Another gentleman in Ballaarat had given £400. Three other gentlemen, Mr. Duncan Love, Mr. Daniel Mackinnon, and Mr. Robert Chirnside, each gave £300. Mr. William Armstrong, of Hexham Park, and Mr. W. M'Naughton Love, London, £200. Mr. Kenneth Gunn, Mr. J. K. Smyth, Mrs. Neil Black, and Messrs. W. and J. Thomson, of Hamilton, each £150. Then Mrs. William Hamilton, Mr. W. Anderson, M.L.A., Mr. W. J. Waddell (of Donald), Mr. P. Murray (of Williamstown), Mr. John Dewar (of South Yarra), Mr. George Wilson (of St. Kilda), Mr. Mungo Scott (of Carlton), Mr. Robert Macdougall (of Arundel), Mr. John Harper, Mr. John Walker, Mr. John Bell, Mr. C. H. James, Mr. James Fergusson, and Rev. John F. Ewing (of Toorak), each £100. During the last six months the amount had been about doubled. The definite subscriptions now reached the sum of £29,279 16s. 6d., while ninety congregations have either not been visited, or have not yet sent in any report.

In these circumstances the General Assembly, as was meet, recorded their gratitude to God for the liberal way in which so many of the members and congregations of the Church have responded to the appeal made to them in behalf of the Jubilee Thanksgiving Fund, and resolved to prosecute the work with renewed vigour. With this, it was agreed to urge the Rev. Mr. M'Eachran to continue Convener of the Jubilee Fund for next year, while awarding him special thanks for his past services.

In the Theological Hall, the Scholars for Session 1886 and their Scholarships were :—

John Matthew, M.A., third year—"Larra."
Hugh M. Burns, M.A., second year—"Larra."
Alexander H. Macdonald—"Amy Gertrude Russell."
Fred. A. Darling—"Hamilton."
J. Howard Meek, B.A., first year—"Cairns."
Robert Murray, M.A.—"Daniel Macdonald."
T. E. Murray—"Hamilton."

The number of students in actual attendance was twenty, the largest roll the Hall has ever had in any one Session. The Missionary Society continued to be conducted with vigour, and the students maintained a Theological Society in which questions in Philosophy, Science, and Religion were freely discussed.

The Board of Examination reported that eight students had passed for entrance into the Theological Hall, and four had passed for exit. Four candidates for employment as Bush missionaries had been examined in Bible knowledge, Christian doctrines, and composition of sermons, and their examinations were sustained.

A vote of thanks was awarded to Dr. Nish for his services in connection with the preparation of the code of Rules.

It was judged expedient to instruct the Committee to consider and to report on the unsatisfactory state of our trusts, and the best and simplest mode of having this state of matters rectified.

On the Allan Bequest, the Assembly agreed :—"1. That for the present it is not necessary to appoint an inspector of Sabbath-schools. 2. That as much of the interest of £5,100 as may be considered requisite for providing prizes to be awarded annually, be applied to this purpose rather than to increase the number of scholarships, and that this experiment be continued for four years. 3. A resolution to have a syllabus of lessons prepared in accordance with Mr. Allan's scheme, as indicated in page 12 of Proceedings of last Commissions, and which will not hinder the use of the International or Edinburgh Scheme of Lessons. 4. The Committee were instructed to prepare the syllabus referred to, to revise the rest of their report, with power to take the opinion of counsel in regard to any of the provisions of the will about which they might be in any doubt."

The Ormond College report was still of a jubilant character. The new wing was opened 23rd December, 1885. Contrary to anticipation, the whole of the new wing was required for students' rooms, and the Master was obliged to refuse applications for accommodation. The total cost of the addition was £14,334 6s. 5d. Of this Mr. Ormond contributed £11,321 14s. 8d.

During the past session, sixty students had attended the lectures in connection with the University classes. Forty-two of these had been in residence.

At the close of the session, the percentage of Ormond College students who passed their University examinations was exceptionally high. Twenty-two of them gained honours.

There were only two permanent scholarships. A large number were given at the foundation of the College, but they were limited to three years. There was urgent need of more on a permanent scale.

The Lecture Hall and the two residences for the Theological Professors had been completed.

The total subscriptions received from the foundation till 30th September, 1886, for the General Fund amounted to £42,998 3s. 5d. Of this sum £32,921 1s. 5d. were given by Hon. Francis Ormond. The Scholarship Fund amounted to £3,300, the permanent to £2,000.

The Scotch College continued to prosper, the attendance having been fully up to the average. Twenty-four boys passed for matriculation, one of whom gained first-class honours in Classics. The College occupied a foremost position at the University Examination. During the four years, 1882–1885, Scotch College students had obtained one hundred and forty-seven passes at matriculation; one hundred and ninety-five passes at the Ordinary University Examinations; seventy-eight places in the Class Honour Lists; twenty Scholarships and Exhibitions in University and Colleges; and fifty-one had degrees conferred on them.

The Ladies' College had prospered both in attendance and income equal to the preceding year. The house had been full, and some extra accommodation had to be secured for boarders. Financial affairs, therefore, put on an encouraging aspect. The pupils had greatly distinguished themselves at the Matriculation Examination. Twenty-two had passed, and out of the fourteen first-classes awarded, the College gained six. The improvement in every department was very conspicuous. The "Wyselaskie Hall" had been erected, and greatly contributed to the efficient working of the school.

The Widows and Orphans' Fund on 30th September amounted to £26,125 0s. 10d. There were thirty-six widows and forty orphans dependent.

The Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund had reached £16,000. There had been a pleasing increase in all the items of income. With a view to increase the amount given to beneficiaries it had been agreed that ministers contributing a £2 per annum rate for ten years should be entitled, when becoming annuitants, to a £3 increment instead of £2 for each year of service beyond five.

The circulation of the *Monthly Messenger* had reached five thousand copies under the editorship of Rev. James Ballantyne. The contract for publication had abruptly terminated in June, but under a new arrangement the issue of the periodical had been maintained without interruption, and would continue for the next two years on the same terms as before.

The Sustentation Fund had received £665 for distribution, making the equal dividend about £17, but the whole scheme stood in urgent need of re-organisation in order to gain the sympathies of all the congregations.

The Capital Funds of the Church this year amounted to £97,357 5s. 5d.

Events of the Year.—1887.

January.—Rev. R. M. Fergus, M.A., having accepted a call from Cheltenham and Mentone, was ordained and inducted on 6th.

February.—A call emanated from Oakleigh in favour of Rev. H. B. Giles. His induction was effected on 17th.

The Napier-street congregation, Fitzroy, called Rev. W. Gray Dixon, M.A., to the pastorate. The ordination and induction took effect on the 15th.

Rev. James Climie obtained leave of absence for three months on account of enfeebled health.

Rev. Lewis W. Rennison sent his resignation of the pastorate of the congregation of Suva, Fiji.

Rev. W. G. Fraser resigned his charge of Essendon, and the pastoral tie was dissolved on the 15th.

Rev. George Dods wished to be informed by the Melbourne Presbytery whether they intended to proceed further in his case, and if not, what his present position was in the Church, and what his relation to the Presbytery.

The answer was "that his case stands for judgment, but the Presbytery are ready to give him the opportunity of acknowledging and clearing himself of his contumacy if he is so disposed."

There were difficulties in the way of prosecuting a new cause at Clifton Hill.

Rev. J. S. Chambers, having accepted a call from Yarraville, was inducted on 28th.

March.—Rev. J. B. Steel was invited by the congregations at Warragul and Lardner to assume the pastorate, and the induction was effected on 15th.

Rev. George Dods, M.A., B.D., was suspended from the office of the ministry until he should clear himself of his contumacy.

Rev. G. Carson obtained leave of absence for about seven months in order to visit Britain.

The Scots Church congregation, with the sanction of the Presbytery, agreed to the appointment of a Commission in Scotland, for the purpose of selecting a minister to fill the vacant pulpit.

April.—Archibald M'Laurin, Esq., of Frogmore, made a grant of two allotments of land as sites for Church and manse in the growing district of Murrumbeena.

The Scots Church congregation, with the concurrence of the Presbytery, having invited Rev. J. Cameron Lees, D.D., of St. Giles', Edinburgh, to come and occupy the pulpit for four months, a communication was received gratefully accepting the invitation. The Doctor's arrival was expected towards the end of the following month.

May.—Announcement was made of the decease of Rev. James Climie, M.A.*

Representatives to the Federal Assembly were elected from among all the Presbyteries of the Church.

June.—The commencement of a new cause had been made in Ascot Vale with encouraging prospects.

Rev. Dr. Cameron Lees, from Edinburgh, Chaplain to her Majesty

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* Memorial Minute.

The Presbytery minute was to the effect that they lamented the loss of one so young, whose brief ministry was so rich in promise of good. A preacher of rare ability and a pastor whose diligent discharge of duty won for him the love of all his people. Mr. Climie was a man whom any Church could ill afford to lose.

the Queen, and Dean of the Thistle, had arrived. He was cordially welcomed and associated by the Melbourne Presbytery. Dr. Lees was also entertained by the Presbytery at a public social evening in the Freemasons' Hall.

Rev. A. Hardie reported the result of his visit to Suva, Fiji. The Presbytery dissolved the tie between Rev. Mr. Rennison and the congregation.

Rev. Dr. Macdonald tendered his resignation of the charge of Dorcas-street congregation, said resignation not to take effect before the meeting of the General Assembly in November.

Rev. D. S. Maxwell obtained leave of absence on account of impaired health.

A Sabbath-school and Mission service were begun in Parkville under the supervision of Erskine Church.

July.—The Bacchus Marsh congregation presented a call to Rev. John A. Stuart, which was accepted. The induction was effected on 31st August.

Conferences were held on temperance under the direction of the Commission of Assembly.

August.—A call issued from Camberwell, signed by one hundred and twenty-one members and adherents, in favour of Rev. P. J. Murdoch, M.A., West Melbourne. The result was that he was duly inducted into the new charge on the 30th.

Rev. D. H. Ballantyne resigned his charge of Brighton, the resignation not to take effect till the end of the year.

The Essendon congregation brought out a call in favour of Rev. A. Stewart, M.A., of the Leigh. After the usual steps, the induction was effected on the 29th November.

September.—The Melbourne Presbytery adopted an address to be presented to Rev. Dr. Cameron Lees on the occasion of his leaving for his North British Home.

It was arranged that Rev. J. Elmslie, of Christchurch, N.Z., should occupy the pulpit of the Scots Church for two months, commencing with the second Sabbath of October.

October.—A commencement of divine service was appointed to be made in the Caulfield Shire Hall, for the benefit of Presbyterians resident in East Caulfield and Balaclava.

The Melbourne Presbytery resolved to oppose the Divorce Bill which had been introduced into Parliament.

The Collins-street congregation decided through the Presbytery to apply to one or other of the leading ministers in the Church of Scotland to come and supply the vacant pulpit for four months. It was soon ascertained that Rev. J. Marshall Lang, D.D., of the Barony Church, Glasgow, had accepted the invitation to come, and would leave the following month for Melbourne.

November.—Messrs. Hugh Burns, M.A., and James Mackay, students, were to be put under examination for license.

Arrangements were made by the Presbytery of Melbourne with the view of the Assembly's decision being carried into effect in constituting them two Presbyteries instead of one, viz.—Melbourne

Presbytery North and Melbourne Presbytery South, the Yarra forming the dividing line.

December.—Rev. Dr. Marshall Lang arrived in order to occupy the Scots Church pulpit for four months. He was welcomed by the members of the two Presbyteries at a breakfast on the 30th.

COMMISSION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 3RD MAY, 1887.

REV. J. G. PATON, MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	J. S. Chambers—Yarraville.
,,	,,	H. B. Giles—Oakleigh.
,,	,,	J. B. Steel—Warragul and Lardner.
,,	,,	T. R. Cairns—St. Andrew's, Ballaarat.
Translation	,,	J. G. Davies, B.A., co-pastorate—Buninyong.
Ordination	,,	J. C. Coutie, B.A.—Nunmrkah.
,,	,,	R. M. Fergus, M.A.—Cheltenham, Mentone, and Mordialloc.
,,	,,	W. Gray Dixon, M.A.—Fitzroy.
Demission	,,	L. Roxburgh—Wedderburn.
,,	,,	A. Stoker—Carisbrook.
,,	,,	A. C. Smith, M.A.—Horsham.
,,	,,	W. G. Fraser—Essendon.
Death	,,	H. C. Ellerman—Lismore.
,,	,,	J. Climie—Camberwell.

It had been agreed to recommend that the Rev. Dr. Cameron, Richmond, New South Wales, be Moderator of the next meeting of the Federal Assembly.

It was agreed, at a meeting of the ex-Moderators, to recommend that Rev. William Ross, M.A., Ph.D., Lancefield, be the Moderator of next General Assembly.

It was resolved that the rules and regulations of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund be submitted to an actuary.

An address of congratulation to Her Majesty the Queen, on attaining the jubilee of her reign, was approved. It would be transmitted by His Excellency the Governor, on behalf of the Church.

The Commission agreed to record their gratification at the reported progress of the sentiment and practice of temperance within the Church, to re-affirm their recommendation to ministers and office-bearers to adopt the practice of total abstinence, for their own and others' good, and to urge Presbyteries and Sessions to take whatever steps they may find practicable to further the total abstinence movement among all the congregations.

In regard to the Jubilee Fund, it was reported that the sum now subscribed amounted to £32,116 15s. 3d. Eighty-five congregations had not sent in their reports. Twenty congregations had not yet been visited.

A report from the Presbytery of Castlemaine, relative to Hay, New South Wales, was submitted in terms of instruction from last Assembly, and was adopted as follows:—

1. "The Presbytery, after receiving the report of their deputy, do not feel justified in offering any further opposition to the disjunction of Hay congregation from this Assembly and its annexation to New South Wales.

2. "That inasmuch as Rev. S. A. Hamilton has expressed a desire to demit his charge and prefer a claim for a retiring allowance, the Presbytery express the hope that the Commission will press on the New South Wales Church the special desirability of dealing liberally with him in this matter.

3. "That, in the event of their failing to come to satisfactory terms with him in regard to such allowance, it be referred to the Federal Assembly for arbitration."

The Committee on the Allan Bequest were re-appointed at last Assembly, and were instructed "to prepare a syllabus, to revise their report to last Assembly, and to report to the Commission." The revised report, which was somewhat elaborate, in order to meet the requirements of the will, proposed to divide each school into four grades or standards—1. Infants and children beginning to read; 2. Scholars from eight to twelve years of age; 3. Scholars from twelve upwards; 4. Members of Bible classes.

Prizes determined by examinations, oral and written, for Standard III. should be awarded to the extent of £58 10s. This sum to be given in the order of merit, according to the following scale:—One prize of the value of £7 10s.; two of £5 each; five of £3 each; seven of £2 each; and twelve of £1 each.

For Standard IV. a sum of £56 should be given in prizes. For doctrinal knowledge (Shorter Catechism), one prize of the value of £8; two of £5 each; three of £2 each; four of £1 each. For Biblical knowledge, one prize of the value of £8; two of £5 each; three of £2 each; four of £1 each.

Then there should be three scholarships of the value of £50 each for boys of Standard III. These should be determined by four half-yearly examinations, and after two years' course of study. And there should be three scholarships of £25 each for girls of Standard III.

Conditions were attached to these. A boy or girl holding a scholarship should be required to attend the University of Melbourne or some high school, approved by the Assembly's Committee, for three years. And when it should appear to the Committee judicious to do so, the holder of a £50 scholarship should be urged to study for the ministry.

The scheme should be managed by two Committees, one appointed by the General Assembly, the other to consist of superintendents of schools working under the scheme.

It was proposed to divide the whole bequest into two sums of £5,300 and £5,100. According to the directions of the will, the former sum should be expended on the six scholarships—£3,500 for boys and £1,800 for girls. The other sum, £5,100 should be at the disposal of the Assembly, under the general direction "to promote Sabbath-school work in the most efficient way."

In consequence of the complicated requirements of the will, it was more than could be expected that the Commission should all at once unanimously assent to the scheme. Accordingly, the cautious resolution was adopted—"That the Commission approve generally of the scheme, and that the Committee be instructed to take the advice of the law agent, and the opinion of Sessions and Sabbath-school teachers as to the scheme."

The Commission of Assembly were moved by overture to take the earliest convenient steps to have the Church records collected, put under safe custody in the Assembly's premises, and committed to the responsible guardianship of those who are appointed for the purpose of taking charge of the Church property. A Committee was appointed on the subject.

A large Committee was nominated and instructed to consider the whole subject of the Sustentation Fund.

THE FEDERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA AND TASMANIA, September, 1887.

The second meeting of the Federal Assembly was held in the Presbyterian Hall, Melbourne, on the 14th September, 1887.

The first Moderator, Rev. James Nish, D.D., of Sandhurst, Victoria, as retiring Moderator, preached an appropriate sermon from Philippians iii. 16.

The Rev. James Cameron, D.D., of Richmond, N.S.W., had been nominated as the second Moderator of the Federal Assembly. The nomination was sustained, and Dr. Cameron took the chair and delivered a suitable address.

Rev. Dr. Nish and Rev. J. S. Laing were appointed permanent Clerks, the former senior and the latter junior.

The business of the Federal Assembly, being in its infant state, was beginning to assume a practical form.

One object of the Assembly was to prepare a Revised Directory for public worship, so that as much uniformity as possible might be maintained in the conduct of divine service throughout all the Federated Churches.

The basis of Federation became a subject of discussion. On this question the following resolution was adopted:—"That no rule approved by the Federal Assembly can become a permanent rule of the Federal Assembly until it shall have been remitted to the Assemblies of the different Churches and approved by a majority of the Presbyteries of the whole, it being understood that the returns from Presbyteries are to be forwarded to the Federal Assembly through their respective General Assemblies." See Appendix (K).

With regard to the Theological Halls of the different Churches, there had been resolutions submitted by the various Committees of the Federated Churches, and the object of the Assembly was to prepare an arrangement for theological studies, so that an efficient and

yet uniform system of training for the ministry, as far as practicable, might obtain among the different Colonies.

With the view of securing a system of harmonious management of Heathen Missions under the superintendence of the Federal Assembly, it was remitted to their Mission Committee "to correspond with all the Churches supporting missions in the New Hebrides, and with the Mission Synod in the Islands," so that a full digest of the different ideas might be prepared for future guidance.

The following resolution was unanimously adopted on the subject: —"That in view of the present difficulties connected with the New Hebrides and the military occupation of certain parts there by the French, and also the diversities of opinion relative to a steam vessel for the service of the mission, no steps be taken meanwhile for procuring a steam vessel; that the *Dayspring* continue to serve the mission, making only one trip to the Colonies at the end of each year; and that advantage be taken of steamers trading between the Australian Colonies and Fiji, to call as often as necessary at some part in the New Hebrides."

The Federal Committee on Missions submitted to the Assembly a draft petition to Her Majesty the Queen, respecting the occupation of the New Hebrides by the French, which was approved. This matter excited an immense amount of interest in all the Colonies, and even among the communities and Churches of Great Britain. The Colonial Governments, with one mind, despatched strong remonstrances and protests to the Imperial Government against the French violation of treaties; and more especially as it was the avowed object of the French Government to transport great numbers of their felon-population to these southern regions, and then set them comparatively free to shift for themselves among the islands, where British labour, blood, and treasure had been so largely expended, the deepest anxieties were aroused, both on religious and political grounds, to ward off the threatened deluge of evil. The petition of the Federal Assembly therefore possesses great historical importance and embodies a statement of facts which it is of consequence to have permanently recorded. We give it in the Appendix (L).

One other special matter engaged the attention of the Assembly. That was, the propriety of holding special evangelistic services throughout the Colonies in commemoration of the centenary of the occupation of Australia by the British. The following resolution was carried unanimously:—"That our Australian Churches signalise the centenary of the British occupation of Australia by some great evangelistic work, and endeavour to get all Christian Churches to join in it. The Assembly further invite the office-bearers and members of the Federated Churches to unite in fervent prayer to God for a special outpouring of His Spirit on the Churches."

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Federal Assembly should be held in St. Stephen's Church, Sydney, on the third Wednesday of September, 1888.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, 14TH NOVEMBER, 1887.

REV. WILLIAM ROSS, M.A., PH.D., MODERATOR.

Induction	—Rev.	J. A. Stuart—Bacchus Marsh.
,,	,,	A. C. Smith, M.A.—Lismore.
,,	,,	W. Mathew—Nhill.
,,	,,	T. Graham—Horsham.
Translation	,,	P. J. Murdoch, M.A.—Camberwell.
,,	,,	D. A. Cameron, M.A.—Bairnsdale.
Ordination	,,	A. M'Neilage—Allansford.
,,	,,	J. Matthew, M.A.—Ballan.
,,	,,	F. Elliott—Yackandandah.
Demission	,,	A. Robb—Koroit.
,,	,,	J. W. Inglis—Ballaarat East.
,,	,,	W. L. Rennison—Suva.

Rev. George Tait, M.A., was appointed Assistant Clerk.

The condition of the Widows and Orphans' Fund was satisfactory. The revenue was still in advance of the payments. There were thirty-seven widows and thirty-three orphans dependent upon the fund. The total amount expended during the year was £2,001. The capital had reached £26,878 5s. 8d., making the increase for the year £753 4s. 10d.

The Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund received during the year the substantial addition to the capital of £903 2s. 10d., after the payment of liabilities. The total revenue for the year from all sources made the capital amount to £18,879 4s. 6d. After discharging all liabilities there remained to the credit of the fund the sum of £17,788 11s. 10d. This year the liabilities have been heavy, and with the prospect of other four annuitants next year, the strain on the fund will be much greater.

An additional Presbytery was created by the Assembly through the division of the Melbourne Presbytery. The two Presbyteries were designated the Presbytery of Melbourne North and the Presbytery of Melbourne South, the river Yarra and Hobson's Bay being the boundary between the two. Both were authorised to meet in the Assembly Hall, and the division to take effect at the beginning of the following month.

The Allan Bequest engages earnestly the attention of the Assembly from year to year. The testator during his life was an enthusiast in Sabbath-school teaching. The central idea of his scheme is the exposition of the Shorter Catechism, imparting an intelligent acquaintance with the scriptural doctrines which it embodies, and inculcating the precepts which it embraces. The scheme, as delineated in his will, constituting the condition of his benefaction, is somewhat complicated. And there has never been perfect unanimity in the Assembly in regard to the practicability of the plan in all its details.

The resolution adopted this year by the Assembly indicates confidence in the success of the tentative efforts which have been put forth to prove that there is no insuperable difficulty at all in fulfilling the conditions of the will. Hence the Assembly rejoiced to

learn that so many Sabbath-school superintendents took an interest in the questions referred to them by last Commission, and had been giving valuable suggestions to the Committee. The Assembly also instructed the Committee to take immediate steps to carry out the intentions of the testator by giving an opportunity to as many schools as wished to compete for the advantages which might accrue to them under the will.

The "Allan Scheme" is in full operation in the Buninyong Sabbath-school where Mr. Allan himself originated and wrought out his own ideal. A report of a special examination of the school recently made was laid before the Assembly and seemed to show that the scheme was practicable.

In regard to the Jubilee Fund, it was reported that, with the exception of twelve, all the congregations of the Church had been visited, and some of them a second time. It was intended that those which had for various reasons been omitted would be visited the following year. Sixty-six congregations which had hitherto kept back, it was expected, would in a short time all, or at all events many of them, become contributors. No very large subscriptions had been received during the year. The more notable donations were £300 from a gentleman who did not give his name; two subscriptions of £150 from Messrs. W. and J. Moodie, of Nareen, and Mr. Robert Jamieson, of Stony Point; two subscriptions of £100 from Mr. William Sloane, and Mr. W. J. Craig, of Mulwala; and Mr. Evander M'Iver, who had given £100, added an "In Memoriam Offering" of £50.

The total amount subscribed up to the present time is £34,408 3s. 5d., and the whole that has been paid is £11,731 17s. 10d. It was recommended that Committees of Management which have not given their congregations an opportunity of contributing to the fund should take steps to have them canvassed, and the result communicated to the Convener without delay.

The New Hebrides Mission was never in a more hopeful state than it is at present. However, the presence of the French military and the operations of the New Caledonian Commercial Company have caused an immense amount of trouble and anxiety. The Imperial Government of Great Britain have at length come to an arrangement whereby the French have agreed to withdraw their troops within four months. In spite of this amicable arrangement, it has been reported that some hundreds of the worst convict population of France have been shipped for transportation to New Caledonia, thereby creating fresh alarm to all the Australian Colonies, as well as to the friends of missions.

Meanwhile, it is matter of thankfulness to God that one great menace has been removed, and that steady progress has characterised the mission work in all departments among the islands. It has been resolved to add a new missionary to the staff of agents in the person of Mr. Thomas Shanks, M.A., of Glasgow, while Mr. A. H. Macdonald, of South Melbourne, student of divinity, is also to go to the New Hebrides as a missionary.

The new *Dayspring* steamship has not yet been purchased. The matter is held in abeyance, chiefly in consequence of steam communication, in the interests of trade, having been opened up between the Islands and Colonies.

The resolution of the Federal Assembly to appoint a Foreign Mission Board, which should have a common fund for receiving all the contributions of the federated Churches, has not met with unanimous favour from the Victorian Church. The Assembly of Victoria, at their recent meeting, resolved, not, however, without dissentients, "For the present to retain control of both the Missionaries and the funds of the New Hebrides Mission and *Dayspring* accounts, while heartily approving of a Federal Board of Foreign Missions for arbitration and advice."

The Chinese and the Aborigines Missions maintain their usual progress.

The funds are noted by an increase in the New Hebrides, and a decrease in the Chinese and Aborigines Missions. The income, however, reached the sum of £3,226 12s. 9d.

An encouraging report continued to be made of Ormond College. The additional erection was at once occupied by students. The new Wyselaskie Theological Hall was opened on 29th March. The Hon. Francis Ormond, M.L.C., proposes, with his usual munificence, to commemorate the Jubilee year by erecting a portion of the north-east or Victoria wing of Ormond College. "The College seems to be a standing investment for Mr. Ormond's surplus money." At the close of the University session, 1886, the success of the Ormond students was brilliant. Eight out of the eleven exhibitions offered were gained by the students of the College. The question of permanent scholarships has not yet been satisfactorily settled.

The balance-sheet shows:—Charge, £46,401 1s. 10d.; discharge, £47,680 8s. 3d.

The Scotch College continued to maintain its high-class character. One hundred and twenty-six new boys had been enrolled. During 1886 forty boys from the College had passed the matriculation examination at the University of Melbourne. A high percentage continued to be paid out of the revenue to the General Assembly.

The Ladies' College had had a prosperous year. There had been fewer boarders, but more day scholars. The Trustees would begin the new year with a handsome balance to their credit. The pupils had distinguished themselves at the matriculation examination. The Principal, Mr. Andrew Harper, who had been taking a holiday in Europe, was expected to resume duty at the beginning of the year.

The Home Mission Committee had found a state of things last year unprecedented in the history of the Church. There were more ministers and preachers on the list than could be steadily employed, and there was the prospect of a considerable number of licentiates being soon added. There was abundant need in the country for them, were there only means at command, to enable the Committee to open up new charges. Twelve pulpits were vacant. There had

been fourteen settlements during the year, and twenty-two ministers were in the field.

Rev. J. Garde was admitted as a minister of the Church.

A very interesting and satisfactory report was submitted on Sabbath-schools and Religious Instruction. Every congregation had its Sabbath-school and its staff of teachers. In many cases the Presbyteries exercised an active and efficient supervision. Annual written examinations were held and prizes distributed, and the results of these were highly encouraging, many of the scholars, senior as well as junior, gaining in marks from seventy to ninety per cent.

A satisfactory report was given of the *Monthly Messenger*, under the efficient editorship of Rev. James Ballantyne. Arrangements, agreeable to all parties, had been made with the publishers, Messrs. Fergusson and Mitchell, the agreement to extend three years longer. The great need is a still greater circulation.

There has been a final settlement of the Hastie bequest. The accumulated value of the estate had risen in twenty-one years to £140,000. The arrangement had been agreed upon to give £80,000 to the heirs-at-law, and £60,000, in equal parts, to the three Bodies mentioned in the will—the University of Melbourne, the Church of England, and the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

The attention of the Assembly was called to the recent decease of four distinguished office-bearers of the Church, whose names must long remain fragrant, on account of their devoted labours to promote the cause of Christ in their respective spheres. These were John C. Lloyd, G. O. Duncan, James Baird, and Robert Ramsay.*

The Assembly appointed that on Sabbath, 4th December, prayers should be offered for God's special mercy towards the Prince Imperial of Germany—Her Majesty's son-in-law, who was dangerously ill—and towards his family, as also for the prolongation of peace amongst the nations of Europe, and that communications be sent to other Churches, suggesting that prayers for the same object be offered on the same day in their various congregations.

On the subject of temperance, the Assembly expressed gratification at the progress of temperance work throughout our Church—resolved that the counteraction of intemperance is a necessary part of the Church's work in seeking the moral and spiritual welfare of our people, and that there is no way of accomplishing this so effectively as the promotion of total abstinence—recommended the ministers of the Church to preach on the subject of temperance on

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* Memorial Minute.

The General Assembly, recognizing the zealous and ungrudging labours of the late John C. Lloyd, of Malvern, G. Oliphant Duncan, of East St. Kilda, James Baird, of Learmonth, and Robert Ramsay, of Ballaarat—all representative elders, deceased since the meeting of Commission in May last—desire to record their thankfulness to God for the long and faithful services which these brethren gave to the work of this Church in General Assembly and on various Committees. By personal exertions and generous gifts they served their generation by the will of God, and "now they are fallen asleep."

any convenient Sabbath about the new year; urged ministers and members of the Church to discountenance the drinking customs prevalent in society; and further counselled that all entertainments given under the auspices of any of our Church Courts be conducted without the use of intoxicants.

The Treasurer's accounts submitted to the Assembly by Sir James MacBain showed an increase of capital during the year ending 30th September amounting to £30,467 13s. 4d.; the total capital, revenue, investments, &c., amounted to £157,649 12s. 2d.

The report on the Theological Hall was gratifying. The Assembly expressed gratitude to God for the continued growth and usefulness of the institution, and urged on all the Presbyteries of the Church to take the matter of Presbyterial scholarships into their earnest consideration.

The Special Committee on the Sustentation Fund submitted a variety of Rules and changes for the more efficient working of the scheme. These required the consideration of the Presbyteries.

In consequence of a strong feeling expressed outside the Church, in connection with evangelistic operations, notice was given by Rev. Dr. Campbell of a motion to the effect—That the General Assembly express their approval of the proposed Centennial Mission, to be held in 1888, and affectionately invite all the people of this Church to unite with their fellow Christians in the meetings for prayer, to be held in the opening of the new year, and trust that they will give all possible sympathy and personal support to the Christian missions to be carried on in town and country during the course of the year.

The following were appointed to be the representatives of the Church at the meeting of the General Presbyterian Council, to be held in London in 1888:—Rev. A. Yule, M.A., Rev. S. Kelso, Rev. W. M. M. Alexander, and Sir James M'Culloch.

Events of the First Half of the Jubilee Year.—1888.

January.—The Melbourne Presbytery at this stage appeared in a divided form, as Presbytery of Melbourne North and Presbytery of Melbourne South. This transformation was effected at once through their own expressed desire and in obedience to the fiat of the Assembly. The dividing line was the Yarra and Hobson's Bay. A new era, therefore, had dawned upon the old Presbytery, which was so renowned for its battles and the hard blows which it had received from the adversary. Each division was found, after separation, to buckle on its armour, as it had done before, to be ready for manly conflict with difficulty and trial. The storms of the past, however, had passed away, and a bright calm had ensued.

Rev. J. M'Connell, Footscray, accepted a call from Wickam-terrace congregation, Brisbane, on the 20th, and was relieved of his charge.

Messrs. H. Burns, M.A., and J. H. Mackay, having passed their examinations, were set apart to preach the gospel.

Dorcas-street congregation, South Melbourne, was declared vacant on the first Sabbath of the year.

Arrangements were made before the new year began for celebrating the Jubilee of the Church, as well as the Centenary of the Australian settlement, by an extended series of evangelistic services and special efforts to enlarge the borders of the denomination.

The Rev. J. Martin, Berwick, resigned his charge, and the Church became vacant.

Rev. J. Marshall Lang, D.D., had entered on his labours in the congregation of the Scots Church with great energy and with cordial acceptance.

The charge of Warracknabeal—Rev. J. J. Spalding, B.A., minister, Presbytery of Wimmera—was stated to embrace the out-stations of Sheep Hills, Arugra, Ailsa, Bangerany, Cannum, and Dart Dart.

Messrs. A. Macdonald and W. M'Bride, having finished their course of theological study and their Presbyterial examinations, were licensed for entering on the holy ministry.

February.—Rev. W. Gardner had accepted an invitation to take charge of the congregation at Suva, Fiji, for at least three months. Shortly afterwards he was permanently settled. This cause was under the jurisdiction of Melbourne Presbytery South, while Perth, Western Australia, was under that of Melbourne Presbytery North.

A communication had been received from Rev. Alexander Williamson, Secretary to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland's Colonial Mission, stating that the Committee had agreed to vote the sum of £100 a year for three years to the congregation at Suva.

The Edinburgh Presbytery of the Established Church sent out a communication to the Melbourne Presbytery, expressing their best thanks for the kind reception that had been given to the Rev. J. Cameron Lees, D.D., D.T., and wishing the Presbyterian Church of Victoria ever-increasing prosperity and usefulness.

A new cause was established at Caulfield. The Presbyterian friends in the district proposed to purchase a site for building a place of worship at or near the corner of Kooyong and Glen Huntly roads.

Mr. William Gardner, student of divinity, having completed his course of study and his Presbyterial examinations, was set apart by the usual forms to the office of the ministry. Having been ordained, as well as licensed, he had authority to discharge all the functions of the ministry at Suva. His ordination took place on the 20th.

Encouraging reports appeared respecting the progress made by the congregation of Traralgon, in Gippsland, and by the Mission Stations at Mirboo, Morwell, Foster, Snowy River, Yarragon, and Narracan.

March.—A letter had been received from Rev. Dr. Marshall Lang, returning thanks to the two Melbourne Presbyteries for the public welcome which they had accorded to him after his arrival.

A letter had also been received from James A. Campbell, Esq., of Strathcathro, Scotland, M.P., LL.D., Convener of the Commis-

sion appointed for the purpose of selecting a minister to fill the vacant pulpit of the Scots Church. It contained simply a progress report.

Rev. Mr. Gibson, licentiate of the Church of Scotland, formerly assistant in St. Matthew's Church, Glasgow, had arrived with the view of preaching as a candidate to the West Melbourne congregation.

Sir W. J. Clarke, Bart., had presented to this Church the handsome gift of a piece of ground for Church purposes at Footscray.

Rev. F. Souter had resigned his charge of the congregations of Miners' Rest and Coghill's Creek, and was liberated on the 7th.

The Rev. James Paterson was ordained on 31st January, at Wangaratta, as the first minister of a large district, known as the Upper Murray Charge.

Rev. W. J. Gillespie, Coleraine, had obtained leave of absence for nine months, in consequence of the infirm state of his health.

April.—A communication had been received from the Commission in Scotland to the effect that they had secured a minister for the vacant pulpit of the Scots Church, Collins-street. They had given the appointment to Rev. Alexander Marshall, M.A., of Inveresk. His arrival was expected towards the end of this month.

Acting on the information received, the congregation, under the presidency of a representative of Presbytery, brought out a unanimous call in his favour. Mr. Marshall was regularly inducted on the 23rd, and received a cordial welcome at the close of the service from the members of the congregation. The stipend was £1,200 and a manse. There were three hundered and fifty members and adherents.

Rev. A. S. C. James had received an invitation through the Presbytery from the Presbyterians of Ascot Vale to assume the pastorate, and he was duly ordained and inducted on the 19th March.

Rev. Hugh M. Burns, M.A., was invited to the pastorate of the Shelford congregation and district, and was regularly inducted by the Geelong Presbytery on the 3rd.

Rev. Thomas J. Riddle obtained a call from the congregation of Koroit, signed by one hundred and thirty-nine members and adherents, and was duly inducted into his charge on the 17th.

The Presbytery of Seymour proposed opening a new field, after an official inquiry whether Gobur, Merton, Black Range, and Gooram could be united to obtain the regular services of a Home Mission agent.

Arrangements were made by the two Melbourne Presbyteries to present an address to Rev. Dr. Marshall Lang previously to his leaving the shores of Australia in the current month.

A call emanated from Brighton congregation to Rev. W. S. Rolland, of Prahran, but was not accepted.

A cordial vote of thanks was passed by Melbourne Presbytery North to the Commissioners in Scotland for the excellent work they had done in securing Rev. A. Marshall as the minister of the Scots

Church. Good judgment had been exercised in the choice they made. Peaceful progress, unity, and prosperity were shadowed forth clearly, as the fruit of Mr. Marshall's evangelical, earnest, and talented ministry.

Rev. R. Hamilton, late of Fitzroy, received the congratulations of the Presbytery on his having obtained, from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity.

The mission charge of Dromana was declared a congregation, and it was agreed to appoint a minister to preside at a meeting for the election of a pastor. This charge is an extensive one, embracing no fewer than eleven preaching stations.

May.—Wodonga, in the Beechworth Presbytery, was prospering. Evangelistic services were in contemplation throughout the district, in unison with the general spirit of the Church. It was earnestly sought to make the year, which was at once the Centenary of Australia and the Jubilee of Victoria, a year distinguished by special evangelistic services all over the land, but especially in the large centres of population.

The congregation of Footscray met, under the presidency of a minister representing the Presbytery, for the purpose of electing a pastor. The choice fell on Rev. M. G. Hart, of Maryborough. The matter was referred to the Presbytery of Castlemaine. The information afterwards came to hand that Mr. Hart had accepted, and his induction would be carried into effect in July.

A very peculiar case came before Melbourne Presbytery South. Rev. T. E. Ick, M.A., minister of Albert Park Church, had studied medicine at the University, and graduated as B.D. Dr. Ick intimated to his congregation his intention of attempting to combine the regular practice of medicine with the work of the ministry, but that he was uncertain whether this was possible without trial. Dr. Ick informed the Presbytery that a small section of his congregation was dissatisfied, and it was agreed between him and his people that he should try the experiment for twelve months, when, if found not to work satisfactorily, he would give up the idea, as he always intended to subordinate the medical to the ministerial profession.

The Presbytery, after consideration, came to the conclusion "that the duties of a minister in a city or suburban charge, in preparing for the pulpit, or in doing pastoral work, and in bearing his share in the general work of the Church, required all his time and energy; still, in the present circumstances of the case, recommend that fuller consideration of the case be postponed, in the belief that Dr. Ick will himself see the necessity of devoting all his energies to the work of the ministry."

June.—The congregation of Brighton had met for the purpose of electing a minister to the vacant charge. The choice fell on Rev. David Gordon, of Invercargill, New Zealand. A telegram announced his acceptance, and he was inducted on the 25th.

Mr. W. M'Bride, having gone through his examination successfully before the Presbytery, with a view to ordination, was solemnly set apart on the 4th to the office of the ministry in Dromana.

Rev. Alexander Duff, M.A., of Cranbourne, had, through impaired health, resigned his charge. He had been engaged more than thirty years in the one charge. He had long served the Master, and was in need of rest. The pulpit became vacant, and Berwick and Cranbourne were united in one charge.

The Presbyterians of East Caulfield were declared a congregation under Presbyterial supervision. It was proposed to erect a schoolroom without delay, which should serve in the meantime for public worship.

Mr. A. H. Macdonald was ordained in order to his going as a missionary to the New Hebrides. He was set apart on the 26th.

The West Melbourne congregation gave a unanimous invitation to the Rev. James Gibson to assume the pastoral charge. The Presbytery of Melbourne North arranged for his ordination and induction on the 16th July. There were one hundred and forty-five members and adherents. The stipend mentioned was £550.

The congregation of St. John's, Ballaarat, gave an invitation to Rev. Robert Erwin, M.A., of New Zealand, Presbytery of Christchurch, to preside over their spiritual interests. The invitation was signed by two hundred and thirty-three members and adherents, and was brought out on 15th May.

The district of Kaniva and Lillimur having been recently constituted a separate charge, the people presented an invitation to Rev. John Garde to assume the pastorate. The induction was effected on 22nd May by the Presbytery of Wimmera.

The foundation stone of a new Church was laid on 22nd May by the Mayor of Flemington and Kensington.

COMMISSION OF ASSEMBLY, 1st May, 1888.

Rev. William Ross, M.A., Ph.D., Moderator.

Induction	—Rev.	D. M'Neill—Donald.
,,	,,	T. J. Riddle—Koroit.
,,	,,	A. S. C. James—Ascot Vale.
,,	,,	J. M'Laren—Golden-square and Kangaroo Flat.
,,	,,	Alexander Marshall—Scots Church, Melbourne.
Translation	,,	A. Stewart, M.A.—Essendon.
Ordination	,,	James Paterson—Tallangatta and Upper Murray.
,,	,,	H. M. Burns, M.A.—Shelford and Inverleigh.
,,	,,	C. H. Talbot—Carisbrook and Majorca.
Demission	,,	D. Macdonald, D.D.—Dorcas-street Congregation, South Melbourne.
,,	,,	D. H. Ballantyne—Brighton.
,,	,,	J. M'Connell—Footscray.
,,	,,	F. Souter—Miners' Rest.
,,	,,	J. Martin—Berwick.
,,	,,	J. H. Shallberg—Kerang and Durham Ox.

Rev. J. Patterson, of Wellington, New Zealand, being present, was associated.

The report of the Home Mission Committee was submitted, and the following resolutions adopted :—

1. "Direct all members of Commission, immediately on returning to their respective fields, to set about instructing their people with regard to the present necessities of the Home Mission, and when an interest is awakened, to follow it up with well-directed collecting agencies.

2. "Instruct Presbyteries to consider this matter at their first ordinary meeting, and see that all Churches within their respective bounds carry out the instruction of the Commission.

3. "Appoint a Committee to consider the expediency of appointing an agent, and if deemed expedient, to—*(a)* designate his title; *(b)* define his duties; *(c)* specify his term of office; *(d)* indicate the amount of his salary, and how it is to be raised, and report to the Assembly.

4. "That the Convener and other ministers appointed by the Committee visit as many congregations as possible in the interest of the fund before the special collection for this year is taken up.

5. "Instruct the Home Mission Committee to consider the best means of procuring additional labourers suited to our newly settled Bush districts."

A pleasing announcement was made by Sir James MacBain to the effect "that a member of the Scots Church congregation had resolved to donate a sum of £5 to each widow of our deceased ministers, and £5 to each beneficiary on the Infirm Ministers' Fund; and that he desired to give these donations—first, as a Jubilee offering—and next, in testimony of his appreciation of the action which led up to the settlement of the Rev. A. Marshall as minister of the Scots Church."

The intimation was received with much satisfaction, and Sir James MacBain was authorised to convey to the donor the cordial thanks of the Commission for his acceptable gift.

The Commission, after hearing the mind of the Presbyteries of the Church, relative to the dispensation of the Lord's Supper in connection with the opening services of the Assembly, decided upon "approving of the recommendation that the communion should be so observed, and declared it to be a standing Law of the Church."

Vigorous efforts continued to be made to prove the practicability of the Allan Scheme of Sabbath-school teaching. Messrs. Welch and MacGillivray, members of the Assembly's Committee, had, with great zeal and self-denial, visited many schools through town and country, explaining the scheme, and had been the means of inducing twenty-four schools to adopt it and reduce it to practice. In terms of the will, steps had been taken to organise a Committee of superintendents to whom the immediate administration of the scheme should be entrusted.

Arrangements had been made for carrying on the work of the Higher Christian Education Scheme in connection with the schools that adopted Mr. Allan's syllabus.

The subject of the Ladies' College came before the Commission in a way which required great consideration. Mr. Harper, the Principal, had intimated that at the close of his three years' term it

was not his intention to enter into a renewal of engagement. The present arrangement would terminate at the end of the year, and it was his intention to retire from the principalship. A Committee was appointed to maturely consider the situation, and bring up a report on the following day. The result was the adoption of the following :—

"The Commission express deep regret that Mr. Andrew Harper, under whose management the Ladies' College had achieved such signal success, has intimated his intention of retiring from the principalship ; resolve to accept the suggestions made by the Committee as to arrangements with the future Principal—namely, that financial and other responsibilities be undertaken by the Church through its College Committee ; that the Principal be paid a fixed salary, with a percentage of the income above a sum to be fixed hereafter ; that the exact amount of salary and percentage be considered by the Committee and reported to next Assembly ; and, further, that the Committee be instructed to consider the question of a successor to Mr. Harper, and recommend accordingly to next Assembly."

The attention of the Commission was drawn to the important fact that the present year is the two-hundredth since the Revolution, which had been fraught with such blessings and privileges, civil and religious, to the British empire. Special celebration of the great event was contemplated by the Protestant community of Britain. The resolution approved by the Commission was the following :— "That in view of the fact that the 5th of November of this year will be the bi-centenary of the Revolution Settlement—an historical fact of great importance for religious liberty and the rights of the Presbyterian Church—this Commission resolves to instruct its ministers to draw the attention of their people to the subject in whatever way may seem to them most desirable."

An important and earnest discussion took place relative to the application of the £19,000 available for Church purposes from the Hastie Bequest. A considerable number of motions and amendments were submitted without any prospect of unanimity. All seemed to agree that the Capital Fund should be always kept one and undivided, and be called the Hastie Bequest—that the fund be invested by the Board of Finance, and that the interest should be available for distribution annually among the different Church Funds which might be agreed upon. The Sustentation Fund, Theological Hall Fund, Infirm Ministers' Fund, Ormond College, Home Mission, were all put forward as possessing special claims for a share. After reconsideration of the matter by a large Committee, it was proposed—"That the amount at the disposal of the Church from the Hastie Bequest be distributed in the following manner, viz.—one-half for educational purposes, and the other half for ecclesiastical purposes ; and the amount for educational purposes be divided equally between Ormond College and the Theological Hall ; and that the amount for ecclesiastical purposes be divided equally between the Home Mission and Infirm Ministers' Funds."

To this proposal, however, there was still an amendment, viz. :—"That the interest derived from the Hastie Bequest be allocated as follows :—One-third to Ormond College and the Theological Hall in such proportion as may be afterwards arranged ; one-third to the Infirm Ministers' Fund ; and one-third to the Home Mission and Sustentation Funds, in such proportions as may also in due course be arranged."

Hence, in view of the great difficulty felt in arriving at unanimity, the Commission judged it expedient to send down both recommendations to the Presbyteries to consider and report to next Assembly.

It was announced that the ex-Moderators had agreed to nominate Rev. D. Mackenzie, of Collingwood, as the Moderator of next Assembly.

A report on the Infirm Ministers' Fund was presented, based on a fresh investigation by two eminent actuaries. From the result of their inquiries, it appeared that the fund is not in a satisfactory condition. From a table of the ages of ministers, it was found that one-half of the contributors were fifty years old or upwards, that twenty-nine were of the age of sixty and upwards, and that there were four in the seventies. The actuarial report recommended—"1. That some special effort be made to raise the capital to the required amount (an additional sum of £25,000) ; or, 2nd. That the amounts promised to beneficiaries be reduced so as to conform with the strength of the fund ; or, 3rd. That the rates be so raised that the present allowance may be with justice continued ; or, That all the three plans be conjoined."

The resolution approved by the Commission was—"That it is necessary (according to the actuarial statement), for the proper working of the fund, that the £3 increment be reduced to £2 in the case of all beneficiaries ; that a graduated scale of entrance rates be arranged according to the age of the entrants ; that the rules, after having been altered by the Committee in conformity with these recommendations, be sent down to Presbyteries to be reported on to next Assembly."

An effort was made to arrange so as to secure the services of the Rev. John M'Neil for evangelistic work in this Church in the event of his demitting his charge in New South Wales. It was reported that he was about to resign his pastoral relation in order to employ his energies more widely in spreading the gospel. The Commission resolved—"That inasmuch as Rev. J. M'Neil has not yet demitted his charge the consideration of the matter be deferred until the Assembly ; and that a Committee be appointed to confer with him and mature the proposal, so that it may be satisfactorily dealt with in the event of Mr. M'Neil having, meanwhile, expressed his readiness to undertake the work of an evangelist within our bounds for a year at least."

On the subject of Heathen Missions, chiefly in their bearing on the action of the Federal Assembly, it was resolved—"That the Committee on Missions to the Heathen be instructed to prepare a statement of the action taken by this Church in regard to the

relation of Foreign Missions to the Federal Assembly, and forward the same to the Clerk of the Federal Assembly, to be submitted by him to that Assembly."

With reference to Chinese immigration, which has proved a subject of exciting discussion in the community, in consequence of the Government prohibiting the landing of immigrants who had arrived in Hobson's Bay, the Commission, having considered the question in the light of righteous dealing between man and man, unanimously adopted the following:—"That this Commission, observing the action that has been taken in regard to immigrants lately arrived from China, express their earnest hope that nothing has been done or will be done in this matter contrary to the laws of justice and humanity, and further remit all further action in regard to it to the Public Questions Committee."

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF MISSIONS TO THE GOLDFIELDS.

The excitement about the gold in all the centres of population became intense. Every week the news grew more and more exciting. The effect on all classes of the community was startling and unsettling. The mercantile establishments were every day becoming more and more deserted. Banking institutions lost their officers and clerks. Tradesmen and labourers of all kinds, in spite of engagements to work for definite times and terms, rushed slip-shod to obtain a share of the enriching smiles of Mammon. All society was shaken to the centre. Physicians, lawyers, and newspaper writers, government officials, ships' officers and crews, all grades and ranks, felt the spell of the great image set up on the goldfields, deserted their posts, and eagerly sped their way to pay due homage to the incarnation of wealth. A social earthquake shook Victoria, and sent its vibrations far and near. Consternation seized the public mind. Business to a large extent was paralysed, and was forced into new channels. The most of the town establishments were sadly crippled for want of hands, and wages rose to a high pitch.

Within a very few weeks of the hoisting of the gold flag society seemed to a high degree disorganised. Men of all ranks and professions were every day forming themselves into companies, purchasing outfits, and rushing away to the localities which appeared to glow most brightly with glittering attractions. After leaving town, however, sorrows and troubles soon began. It is not all gold that glitters, and, instead of the precious metal, all that is often got is mud. The winter season had not quite passed away. It was the rainy period. The journey of about 100 miles to the scene of operations lies through new country, almost entirely without roads or bridges. It leads through plain and forest, up hill and down hill, over ground which was now soft clay, now rough stone, along tracks cut by incessant traffic with heavy loads of goods into deep and ever-deepening ruts—all but impassable, and yet unavoidable—and sometimes right through large holes full of slush, and if the dray is not upset, stuck fast, or broken down, let the owners be thankful. Under experiences so painful the ardour of parties, as a general rule, had time to cool considerably before reaching the destined goal. However, let the struggles, disappointments, and crosses be what they may at the outset, there is a bright prospect charming the imagination, and the fortune-hunters press on. Streams of companions in voluntary tribulation are behind, and streams are before. The city becomes in a manner forsaken, and the Churches, like all the civil establishments, share in the general desertion.

An all-important question suggested itself—Is there any provision being made for holding religious services among the multitudes that are massing in search of gold? The minds of Christian people, and especially of Christian ministers, are sorely exercised on this very subject. There are many formidable difficulties in the way. The miners themselves, many of whom are Christian men and office-bearers of Churches, are all placed in new and trying circumstances. Their employment is a kind of temporary experiment, liable to great change, and involved in continual uncertainty. Those who are men of Christian sympathies on the fields are scattered and separate, and find combination for religious objects, except on a limited scale, difficult, if not impossible. The Churches in town have become weakened and discouraged by the departure of so many heads of families, and their power to organise and efficiently equip a gospel mission to the mines is sadly crippled, even if the suitable agent were at command. A meeting of the representatives of the different Churches was held in November, in the schoolroom of the Scots Church, for the purpose of considering whether all could combine to support a permanent evangelistic agent among them. The difficulties were various. It would hardly be possible to raise sufficient funds, and it would not be easy to find an agent who would satisfy all, even though he had the special qualifications required. It would be almost indispensable that he should be free from family entanglements, or, if not, that he should accept tent life, with all the inconveniences and probable changes of residence, in order to suit the rushes which were so often occurring during the first months of mining experience. The ministers agreed, however, to make personal visits to the mines, as they were able, for the purpose of preaching the gospel.

Besides, the Churches were at this stage in Victoria's history very few in number, and all more or less in the stage of youthful existence, struggling with initiatory difficulties, and earnestly striving and praying for enlargement and stability. There were only seventeen Presbyterian ministers in settled charges in the whole Colony. Four of these were in Melbourne—one Established, one Free, and two United Presbyterian. Of the seventeen, four were Church of Scotland, five were Free, and eight were United Presbyterian. Besides these eight, there were other three ordained United Presbyterians in the Colony; but two of them did not follow the ministry, and the third was being actively employed in mission visits to the mining fields.

The agent of the United Presbyterian Church (Rev. R. Hamilton), who was commissioned to Ballaarat in October, within a month of his arrival, was launched forthwith into a new and strange experience on his visit to the diggings. The ride from Geelong to Buninyong, on the Saturday, was a long but pleasant one, through the park-like scenery of Australia Felix. A very kind and hospitable storekeeper from Edinburgh furnished accommodation. His house was literally rushed by gentlemen of all professions on their way to the grand centre of attraction. The provision for the night's repose was simple, if not amusing. At the time for rest, the many strangers filling the parlour did not need to retire, or turn in, or prepare a place for sleep, but only to take a blanket from the arms of the assistant storeman and lie down.

On Sabbath morning there were some seven miles to ride to the great field of magnetic power. The road lay through a long valley, full of natural bush, large and small, living and dead, standing and fallen. The land is gently elevated on each side. A small river, the Yarrowee, runs along in the direction we go, and supplies the miners with water to wash the auriferous stuff. The timber is all the indigenous gum, of one kind

or another, with little or no brush, and admitting of easy travel, especially by riding. The scene presenting itself on the way to the mines was novel and striking, and presented anything but a favourable aspect of the moral and spiritual character of the strange community. For miles before reaching the centre of interest it could not have been known that it was the Lord's Day. There was little or no active digging for gold, but there was a considerable amount of work going on auxiliary to mining. Some were prospecting, some erecting tents, some cutting saplings for tent-poles, some felling trees for firewood and for the bark with which to provide shelter, some unloading drays, others lounging, and multitudes moving to and fro as if without much aim in particular. The great majority appeared somehow to have agreed upon a distinguishing style of mining costume—the blue shirt and the broad-brimmed straw hat.

While vast multitudes of tents and people were scattered over a great surface, more or less densely occupied, there was at the same time a chief centre of interest. The population was largely concentrated on and around Golden Point. This central place was so called because of its forming a spur of land jutting from the hilly range which lay along the track from Buninyong, and because of its suitableness and convenience as a dry and healthy camping ground. It lay in the immediate neighbourhood of the best and largest amount of auriferous land, and the waters of the creek were near at once for mining and for domestic purposes. At this early stage in the history of gold-seeking mining was wholly alluvial. The small river ran through an extended flat, which was almost all enriched with the gold deposit only a few feet beneath the surface. At this immense encampment the aspect to an observer at a distance was exceedingly striking. Here already, within a very few weeks of the discovery, were thousands and tens of thousands of calico tents and bark huts, each owned by a party or small company of united miners, the whole forming a town of no small dimensions. The congregated crowds reminded one of a gigantic bee-hive, or an immense mound of lively and industrious ants. Here the swarming multitudes were settled for the time as if by magic, in the midst of an extensive primeval forest. The wonder was whence they could have come, seeing the distance from any town was so great, the difficulties of transit were so many, and the population over a wide-reaching area of country was so sparse.

The great and pressing question which forced itself on the attention of a messenger of the cross was how to gain the ear of the masses with the gospel message. The services of worship must be in the open air, but there was no Sabbath bell to summon the worshippers. Notices might be posted on trees during the week, and friends might be engaged to circulate verbal information. But the best of all notices, which could neither be overlooked nor forgotten, was to commence the service with a few friends, and the sounds of praise and prayer soon drew the crowds together. The weather proving favourable a very large attendance was secured, and the vast crowd standing in a circle listened with devout and earnest attention till the close. Some remained and tendered thanks, in the absence of the collection. Sometimes it proved altogether unsuitable to conduct open-air services on account of the rain, even the sleet, and the penetrating cold—then the observances must be shortened or abandoned. The opportunity, too, was favourable, and was improved, for distributing a large number of the tracts of the Religious Tract Society.

During the week, time was occupied visiting neighbouring squatters' stations, seeking opportunities of private usefulness, and inquiring into the spiritual necessities of districts. The squatting friends in the vicinity were free and kind with invitations of hospitality. Several parties of

miners, who were friends, acquaintances, or shipmates, presented their offers of day and night accommodation. These were much prized, and in several instances thankfully accepted, in order to having means of doing good among the miners as occasion might be found. One young man was reported to be dying. He had been seized with violent trouble, and was sinking under a consuming fever. He was a Roman Catholic, and positively refused a visit. He had no attendant, no comfort, no friend, to afford him any relief or assistance. He would listen to no kind or soothing words from a heretic, and if any truth about Christ or salvation were spoken he would rise and leave his tent.

The daily operations of the miners were interesting and instructive in a high degree. These evinced the fearful spell under which men are influenced by the hunger and thirst of gold. Multitudes were rocking cradles; corresponding numbers were baling water out of the creek and emptying it into the cradles for washing the stuff. Some were conveying the auriferous material from the holes, either in bags, in wheelbarrows, or in carts; others were digging with pick and shovel till they reached the blue slate and the yellow deposit. Those who were not possessed of cradles would wash their stuff in tin basins. The creek all along on both sides for a considerable distance was perfectly crowded with men, throng with their rocking and washing operations. The constant noise and hum of the work reminded one of the sound of some immense factory carrying on its enterprise, and the miners seemed all as much absorbed as if they had in hand some great matter of life and death.

It appeared to be a wise provision in heaven's moral government that the precious dust should not be obtainable without the healthful exercise of all the physical powers, so as to preserve the balance between body and mind. Exciting incidents were often occurring. Some instances of extraordinary and unexpected success in the search after the precious metal have been attended with the most serious effects, both on body and mind, and in certain cases with fatal results. The arm of the law for the suppression of disorder and wrong was rough and strong. The police might be seen rushing to a digger's hole with loaded pistols to settle disputes, or to rescue a claim from lawless usurpation. Offences were summarily tried by the commissioner, and occasionally a convicted transgressor was sentenced, in the absence of a lock-up, to be tied to a tree. The whole encampment presented a most impressive aspect at night, whether with or without the light of the moon. There seemed to be dogs in any number incessantly barking, guns on all sides reporting, men tramping to and fro, talking and shouting; hundreds of smoking and burning logs in front of the huts, sending their flashing gleams through the dark-leaved forest, and casting a livid and unearthly glare over the entire camp; all combined to render the scene picturesque and romantic in the extreme. Had it not been for the personal knowledge that there were many Christian and God-fearing men among the mighty mass, moralising on the extraordinary scene was fitted to make one feel as if suddenly pitched into the midst of an immense encampment of semi-civilised men, who might be bent on some great marauding or warlike expedition, and whose religious wants were as urgent as those of the wild and untutored heathen.

An incident may be mentioned in connection with the mission work pursued while residing in a neighbouring squatter's family. The cook and table waiter was found to be a man of superior education and talent. Conversation elicited the information that he accepted his menial office through misfortune, and that his object was to make a little money in order to start afresh in some unmentioned pursuit. It came out that he

had no faith in divine revelation. He accepted tracts, but with a sardonic smile, saying, "I accept them out of courtesy, but I do not promise to read them." According to the testimony and belief of a fellow-servant, after this man finished his engagement, he entered on a career of bushranging—in other words, of highway robbery. After a number of daring outrages, he was arrested, tried, and convicted. He was condemned to the hulks, but while doing his sentence he attempted escape, was again tried, was convicted under a charge of murder, and was sentenced to execution. He was saved from the gallows by committing suicide. This was believed to be the once notorious Capt. Melville.

After the completion of the four weeks' term, it was necessary to return to town, and report. An attempt at least had been made in all sincerity to proclaim the gospel at a new and extraordinary field—one full of a gold-fever. There were many hindrances to an efficient performance of the work. There was no place for meeting under shelter, and the elements on two Sabbaths were unfavourable. Presently changes not anticipated were occurring. While many of the great gathering were doing well and prospering, others were not succeeding, and therefore suffering loss. The cry arose that a new goldfield had been discovered at Forest Creek, and it mightily impressed all the unsuccessful. Forthwith tents were struck in hundreds, drays were packed, and off went the thousands to the new field. It almost looked as if Ballaarat would be deserted. The exciting and threatened demolition to appearance of the tent city afforded a fresh reason for repairing to town to report upon the Mission.

It was matter of no small perplexity to know how to accomplish the return journey. There was no conveyance available, no regular means of transit of any kind to be found. No horse could be obtained either for hire or purchase. If the journey was undertaken, it must be on foot. A companion was found to join in the pedestrian expedition. The weather had in November become excessively hot. The first night was spent in Buninyong, and a start was made next morning before daylight. All the inconveniences of summer heat must be endured—thirst, flies, dust, want of shade, shelter, or roof, perspiring and exhausting toil. Then it was thirst without water. But all who travel to and fro are "mates," fellows in travel as well as in trouble, and a kind of sympathising and brotherly spirit uniformly prompts to mutual help from scant supplies, whether of water or food. Frequently a supply in short measure of cold tea, or of bottled water, which must not be too narrowly scanned, is obtained. The burning sun, however, does not shine without the interval of night. How welcome the deep shades after the hot glare of unclouded day!

After reporting to the Mission Board in Melbourne concerning the work done in Ballaarat, and earnest deliberation among the members, it was judged expedient to give Mr. Hamilton a second commission to visit Forest Creek, to continue evangelistic work among the miners. In illustration of the pioneering work done in 1851, while endeavouring to preach the gospel at the early goldfields, it may be proper to give a somewhat extended sketch of this second visit to the new mining district, especially as the visit embraced a missionary tour through the surrounding country. Besides, after the lapse of thirty-seven years, the early scenes of mission work in the interior in connection with the gold discovery, which are alike important and instructive, are in danger of being forgotten. Having purchased a horse, with a view to independence and facility in accomplishing work, the first day's journey, in the beginning of December, 1851, conducted to the hospitable roof of W. Robertson, Esq., of Wooling, at the foot of Mount Macedon, a distance of over forty miles from the city. The weather was lovely, the morning sun was without a

cloud, and the heat was tolerable, but every day it was becoming more and more intense, and within a few weeks it would be midsummer. In riding through the lonely bush, the air was balmy and exhilarating, was scented with the healthful perfume of the abounding gums, was everywhere resounding with the rich and highly musical notes of the organ-bird, and the whole scene was enchanting. The mind was strongly impressed with the infinite wisdom, power, and goodness of the great God of nature, and with the pure and exalted happiness which would doubtless have been the portion of man in this beautiful world but for the blasting influence of sin. Hence the sad and innumerable drawbacks. There are, however, redeeming features on the background of all the ills. As a partial protection from the scorching sun, the puggaree on the hat falling over the neck was necessary, and the veil on the face was indispensable as a defence against the swarms of persistent flies.

The second day's journey led on to the main track through swampy ground into the famous Black Forest on the west of the mount. The forest was very extensive, and the gums in all their variety, of which it was composed, were so thick and tall and dense as to throw on the traveller a deep shade. Hereby it afforded most welcome shelter from the burning sun, but shut out all view of the world, and created such a feeling of solitude as to have secured for it the name of *Black*. Moreover, it was appropriately named in a moral as well as a natural sense. The dense bush afforded easy refuge from the grasp of law to reckless bands of bushrangers. These lawless men, under the leadership of some old convict, or upstart bandit, infested this part of the track, pouncing unexpectedly on the traveller, bailing him up or tying him to a tree, under the terror of a revolver pointed at his head, till he was relieved of his gold. The place became the object of universal dread, as if haunted for miles with unseen perils. The rider, therefore, usually kept a more than usual sharp eye and ear, quickening his pace while traversing the close shades, not able to breathe freely till the open country was reached. Soon the Macedon ranges, towering in the highest part to the height of 3,324 ft. above the ocean level, and covered with trees to the summit, were left behind. Two rivers, the Campaspe and the Coliban, flowing north, and Jackson's Creek, flowing south, have their origin here. Up to the point of this dividing range, the path from Melbourne is an ascent; going north into the interior, and on for about 112 miles to Echuca and the Murray, it is a descent.

Passing through Kyneton, a nicely situated town, which forms the centre of an extensive agricultural district, a sheep farm on the Coliban, belonging to Henry Orr, Esq., was reached on the Saturday afternoon. Resting here for the night, an early start was made on Sabbath morning, in order to reach the new goldfield, if possible, in time to hold service. The road was well covered with bullock-dray loads of goods on their way to the mines. At length the busy scene opens to view. The field was surveyed, and it was found that the miners were scattered over a large surface. It was evident that it would not be an easy matter to hold meetings so as to reach any considerable number of miners with the sound of the gospel. Two places were fixed, with the assistance of some Christian men, where services could be conducted. But they were four or five miles apart, and it would entail great fatigue in walking under intense heat, and over a road cut up by traffic and covered with dust some inches deep. It was the best arrangement that could be made to have a morning service at one end of the creek, and an evening one at the other, near the post-office. The attendance at the services was never large, owing, doubtless, to the scattered character of the population, but those who came manifested a devout and earnest spirit. There is reason to believe that one of those

two services was held on a hill at or very near the spot where the Presbyterian Church in after years was built—after the town of Castlemaine started into being, as the offspring of the original rush in 1851. It was soon made apparent that remaining at the mines during the week would be of little use in prosecuting mission work. The resolution was therefore formed to evangelise along the Loddon, and around the whole district, returning to the miners on the Lord's Day.

The first night, after reaching Forest Creek, was spent under the hospitable roof of the Hon. W. Campbell, Esq., of Strathloddon. On the way to the house an aboriginal was overtaken. He was dressed in European clothing, was quite subdued in his manner, could speak broken English, and gave it to be understood that he wished to be present at the religious service that would be held at the house, he being a servant there. He gave evidence of having been under Christian instruction by his conversation and his accurate repetition of the Lord's Prayer. An interesting service was held in the evening, when a large number of domestics attended. Next day began a series of visits to the settlers along the Loddon, and as far as Carisbrook. At this inland and lonely place, being a township only on the map, almost the only house seen being a mill on the creek, a Court was to be held. The Court-house was a curiosity. It was a slab hut, with a bark roof, and was fitted to accommodate not more than about a dozen people. The table was in keeping, being something like a piece of rough gum, with two forked tree-limbs stuck in the ground for legs. The poor structure, however, be it remembered, represented the majesty of law. There it stood in its grand humility, the symbol of British Imperial power, which speaks from a throne on whose dominion the sun never sets, makes its voice heard in the remote solitudes of antipodean Australia, and authoritatively declares that even handed-justice shall be everywhere meted out to its subjects.

The chief reason for visiting Carisbrook on a Court day was that a considerable number of the squatters of the district should be present, and a convenient opportunity would be found to inquire into the spiritual necessities of the district, and the prospects opening for the settlement of a Presbyterian minister. The answers were all discouraging. There were numbers of settlers who were Presbyterians, but they had already promised support to a Church of England missionary. Rev. Mr. Gregory, indeed, was already at work in the surrounding country. But if a suitable Presbyterian minister or missionary should come and labour among them, they would give him a share of their support at least, and some who were not Presbyterians themselves would even prefer a Presbyterian to one of their own denomination. There was at the same time no real encouragement given for a preacher to come and settle with any prospect of adequate support. Indeed, at this stage in the history of the Colony, there was no population throughout the bush, except the squatters with their families and their immediate dependents. Nowhere was there any provision made, or in the meanwhile forthcoming, for the family life of a minister outside the settler's own residence, and the only way by which the gospel could be spread was by the agency of missionaries or educated evangelists who were without encumbrances, except in places, of course, where townships were already formed.

The night before repairing to Carisbrook was spent at Plaistowe, the station of the Messrs. Joyce Brothers. These Christian friends were very kind and hospitable, as is the general character of Australian sheep-farmers. A considerable number assembled in the evening for Christian service.

On returning from Carisbrook, a thirty-mile stretch to the west from the Forest Creek mines, a visit was paid for the night to Charlotte Plains station, the recent residence of Mr. Simpson, who had been unfortunately drowned in attempting to cross on horseback the swollen river of the Loddon.

The next visit was made to Mr. Bucknall, of Rodburgh Vale. Here every comfort was enjoyed in the midst of a kind, Christian family. There was every encouragement given, too, in the conducting of spiritual exercises in the evening, with all the domestics present.

Before reaching the goldfield, visits were paid and hospitality enjoyed at the residences of Mr. Menzies, of Hunter's station, and of Mr. Kennedy, whose settlement was only a short distance from the mines.

During the journey a number of huts were visited, many tracts distributed, the Scriptures read and expounded, prayers offered as opportunity presented itself, and everywhere a kind reception was accorded. Even Roman Catholics, far removed from priestly influence, did not hesitate to show hospitable intentions, to hear the Word read, to join in devotion, and to accept the little messengers of truth.

Hardly any of the aboriginals could be seen in all this extended journey of sixty miles. At one of the stations visited, a young woman, or lubra, as the female was named, was seen in her mia-mia. She could speak almost no English, but she could understand a little. An effort therefore was made to communicate a few simple ideas of gospel truth, and not without evidence of effect.

Having arranged the course of visits so as to be able to return to the mines for Sabbath work, Strathloddon was reached on the Friday evening. Mrs. Campbell's kind and friendly spirit encouraged the liberty of again presuming on entertainment for man and horse. In the absence of the Hon. Mr. Campbell, this lady's hospitable manner did the highest honour to her husband's reputation. Her liberality even extended to the welcome present of a small gold nugget, the only piece of the precious metal owned on the occasion of these mission visits. After the usual evening service and another night's repose, the horse was consigned for safe keeping to Mr. Campbell's paddock. The journey of five miles to the mines was accomplished on foot, under an oppressive midsummer sun, on Saturday. The night was spent in the enjoyment of as much rest as could be obtained, lying on an open dray, with the shafts resting on the ground. Still it was the best sleeping accommodation the friends could afford, and it had the charm of novelty.

On Sabbath public worship was conducted at the places previously arranged, and announced by such means as were at command. The audiences were not particularly numerous, but the worshippers were orderly, devout, and attentive. The scattered character of the population and the nature of the employment were exceedingly unfavourable to a lively interest in divine things. In spite of these obstructions, signs were not wanting of a lively interest in the mission and its successful prosecution. There were personal hindrances to some extent as well. The whole work was most trying and physically exhausting. The flies were a perfect plague. They were not simply annoying—whether eating, sleeping, walking or riding, they were almost tormenting. It was impossible either to take a meal or to preach a sermon without a handkerchief in one hand continually waving to and fro. The exertion of conducting two services without shade or shelter under a December sun, and walking the space of four or five miles to the second service and as many back, were exceedingly prostrating. Besides, news had already spread of a fresh gold discovery at Bendigo, about 25 miles further north, as had been the case at Ballaarat, inflaming the ambition and

stimulating the restless energies of the miners. Great numbers were consequently dissatisfied and unsettled, and a stampede took place. The unsuccessful joined in the new rush, and they moved away in thousands, giving fresh illustration of the old aphorism, *omne ignotum pro magnifico est*. In these circumstances, there was little hope of being able to accomplish much spiritual good among a people so susceptible of wild impulse, so unstable and migratory, so liable to be acted on by exciting reports, and so absorbed with the passionate thirst of the golden treasure.

The following week was laid out for another tour of evangelising work. After returning to Strathloddon and obtaining the horse, another start was made on the Tuesday morning in a northerly and easterly direction. The route lay in the line of the new rush, and a favourable opportunity was enjoyed of seeing the crowds of miners with horses, bullocks, drays, and their belongings that lined the main track to Bendigo. Pressing on without undue lingering by the way, the residence and station of Mr. Campbell, of Bullock Creek, was reached before nightfall. Here an interesting service was held in the evening. A numerous meeting mustered, earnest attention was paid throughout the service, and two children were baptised.

The following day Gibson's station was visited, but it was soon found that the door of any useful service here was not open. A number of strangers were apparently on a visit, who gave it very distinctly to be understood that a minister's company was not wanted. One indeed was evidently a notoriety, who gave free vent to daring blasphemy. Be it noted, however, this case was altogether exceptional.

This locality was only a few miles distant from the newly-discovered goldfield of Bendigo. It could serve no purpose, however, to visit the scene of excitement in its present unsettled condition. The whole district could only present the aspect of distraction, and bustling preparations for digging holes and washing out the gold, if it was there. Returning southward, with a view to an easterly direction, a vast multitude of miners, chiefly from Forest Creek, were met on their way northward, bag and baggage, to the Bendigo field. There seemed to be thousands already in the rush. The only resting place to be seen all the way on the main track was the Porcupine Inn. An immense mass of men, cattle, and goods had accumulated here. This was a convenient halting place for one's own rest and refreshment. Having obtained the needed supply, and made careful inquiries as to the route, a start was made in the afternoon towards the east. The object was to gain the same evening the station of Sutton Grange, owned by Norman Simpson, Esq. It lay, however, at a long distance on the eastern side of the Mount Alexander Ranges, and there was dense bush the most, if not all, of the way. The grizzly, frowning heights lay right in front, after leaving the main highway, running north and south. There was a pretty well-defined track to the summit of the rocky ranges. The top was overspread with immense blocks of grey granite, lying loose and detached.

One of these was in course of time selected for a monument to Burke and Wills, the explorers, who left Melbourne in August, 1860, and who were the first to cross the great Australian continent through to the northern coast. On the return journey, they perished at Cooper's Creek of starvation. A plentiful supply of provisions was within their reach, hid expressly for them beneath the surface by previous mutual arrangement, but they failed to discover the spot. It was decided to erect a monument consisting of one of those huge granite masses. It required extraordinary skill to remove the gigantic block of thirty tons that was selected. It was a work, indeed, of no ordinary danger to get so unwieldy a mass conveyed

to the Melbourne cemetery. The feat, however, was accomplished. There it stands, in its natural unchiseled state, in the great city of the dead, with its one hundred and thirty-five thousand occupants, a monument of the success, but at the same time of the disastrous results, of the great inland exploring expedition. It is not a pleasant reflection that the expedition made its start from the Royal Park, amid great pomp and ceremony, on the Lord's Day, and without any open recognition of God, to seek His guidance and obtain His blessing.

On descending the east side of the ranges, the pasture was unusually rich and abundant. The luxuriance of the feed, however, while pleasing to the eye, became the occasion of painful perplexity by effacing all appearance of a track. A boundless forest seemed spread out on all sides, without the slightest mark to guide to any human habitation. The question to be solved was, how was Sutton Grange ever to be reached? To retrace one's steps would be humiliating. The only course was to face the difficulty, and to press forward with all speed in the direction which a wise consideration suggested, trusting to a kind and gracious Providence. The fast declining sun did not help to allay the fears of a night in the bush. No sign of a track could be detected. The right course for the station, judging by the sun, could only be guessed. The slightest deviation from the right line would soon widen into miles and miles of error, ending, it might be, in hopeless bewilderment, and in the sad experiences of a person when lost. No sheep or shepherd could be seen, no smoke from a chimney could be perceived, no footstep of any weary traveller could be heard, no coo-ee could awaken the faintest response. The solitude was that of a vast natural and arborial wilderness, and was of the deepest. After a ride of perhaps three hours, a faint impression was made on the eye that a track had just been crossed at about right angles. It was indispensable that there should be no uncertainty in a matter so important. To a certainty, it was a track, and revealed the alarming fact that an error of nearly 90° had been summing up apparently its perilous possibilities. The track running southward was accepted, in the hope it might lead to a hut, or a man, or perchance the station in quest. Speeding along with fresh energy and hope, for the sun was nearing the horizon, a large sheet of water was reached. Here the flocks doubtless slaked their thirst, for there was evidence of this in a well-trodden border. Hopes therefore brightened and cheered, and ere long a flock of the fleecy wool-growers were descried, gladdening the anxious spirit. Pushing still forward in eager expectation, by-and-by a paddock fence was distinctly discerned, doubtless, as was confidently hoped at least, the immediate appendage of the squatter's residence, though no house for a considerable distance was seen. Still the fence, it was believed, meant the mansion. Hence anxieties were hushed and fears dispelled. The goal was substantially reached. The critical journey after all had a happy finish. Joy and thankfulness became the feelings in ascendance.

The fence proved to be the side of a paddock one mile square, and the house, which after a while came in sight, stood on the far side. In the absence of Mr. Simpson, his gentle and amiable wife gave a kind and cordial reception. In course of the evening, the domestics and servants were assembled, and religious service was conducted. The meeting was most encouraging, and it was hoped from the deep attention paid that good impressions were produced. The contrast between the comfort, the good cheer, the warm friendship, and the various signs of civilised and Christian life on the one hand, and the wild solitudes reigning all around over long and widely extended natural forest-wastes, so recently encountered, on the other, could not fail to be appreciated.

Next day the last place in the programme of visits for the week was

reached—Stratford Lodge, the station of Edward and John Orr, Esqs. This station was beautifully situated on the Coliban, a considerable distance from that of their brother on the Campaspe, which was visited on the way from town, and also about five miles from the nearest part of the Forest Creek goldfield. Here, as at the other stations, the kindness of the family made one feel perfectly at home. There was a splendid garden attached to the house, replenished with all kinds of delicious fruit, some of which—in the middle of December—had begun to ripen. The river hard by, unlike the dull, dingy rivers of Australia in general, not only flowed, but briskly flowed, and that, too, over a clear, pebbled bed, and, in the midst of a country everywhere parched by the intense heat of the brilliant summer sun, imparted such freshness, life, and beauty to the place as to render it quite enchanting. The luxury of resting here a whole day after the previous incessant labour during the week was much enjoyed.

The following day, Saturday, it was found necessary to repair to the goldfield, and to do so on foot, in order to be ready for work on the Lord's Day. It was deemed necessary to leave the horse behind for safe keeping, although it was excessively fatigning to walk. The distance which required to be travelled under the extreme heat of the weather, besides the work to be done, was sufficient to tax a strong constitution. However, there are trials and difficulties connected almost with all duties, and grumbling will not make them easier, but rather contribute to their aggravation. After arrival at the mines, the first object in view was to apprise the friends, and to use all available means for securing as good an attendance as possible at the services next day. Falling in with former acquaintances, who had not joined in the new rush, they gave a kind welcome to such hospitality as it was in their power to show. Under a tarpaulin during the night a comfortable sleep was enjoyed. The morning, however, ushered in one of the most intensely hot days of the season. The excessive heat generated the fly-plague. Small house-flies swarmed in incalculable numbers, and baffled all attempts that could be put forth in self-defence. Thirst was another affliction, and could scarcely be allayed by any amount of liquid. These troubles added greatly to the difficulty of a comfortable discharge of duty. In addition to all, the attendance at the two services was not improved by the fresh rush to Bendigo. Great multitudes had left, and there was all the greater difficulty in exciting a lively interest in the observance of public worship. It would require time to allow mining to become a settled employment, and regular townships to spring up, and to fix the population down to steady business habits, before mission or ministerial work could be prosecuted to a satisfactory end.

Next morning the sun seemed to shine with a burning glow of increasing intensity, and furnished anything but an encouraging prospect in undertaking another journey on foot back to Stratford Lodge, after the previous two days' exhausting work. Before leaving the ground, after earnest consultation with friends, it was judged advisable not to remain over another whole week, but to return to Melbourne and report respecting the new dispersion of the miners for another field. Bidding good-bye to friends, with cordial thanks for their encouraging attentions, the way to the station was pursued. The long journey on foot was excessively trying after the toil of the week and the fatigue of the Sabbath services. There was no cloud, hardly any shade, even of the straggling branches of a gum-tree; no relief from the scorching rays. Thirst was most painful, and not a house to be seen the whole way, where one could ask a drop of water. Most unexpectedly, however, a small pool of clear, delicious water was found soon after, and

afforded the most gratifying relief. It was another agreeable surprise, while slaking one's thirst at the precious pool, to observe a number of small crab fishes crawling about. At length the hospitable quarters were reached, and, after a day's refreshing rest, the journey to Melbourne was undertaken and carried through successfully, with rest at convenient stages by the way.

APPENDIX B.

REASONS OF THE FREE CHURCH MAJORITY FOR THE EXPULSION OF THE MINORITY.

"WHEREAS this Synod did in January, 1854, by an unanimous resolution, enter into negotiations for Union with the then Presbytery of Melbourne, in connection with the Established Church of Scotland, on the understanding and condition that that judicatory was to become a separate and independent Synod, not connected with or standing in any special relation to the Scottish Establishment; and this condition was soon after fulfilled by that Presbytery being formed into such a separate and independent Synod, under the name and title of the Synod of Victoria.

"Whereas these negotiations thus begun were carried on by committees, and conferences, and correspondence for nearly two years; and this Synod, after long, frequent, and prayerful deliberation and discussion did, at its annual meeting in Geelong, on the 6th day of November, 1855, on the unanimous recommendation of their Union Committee, unanimously resolve to go into the said Union with the Synod of Victoria, on the terms and conditions laid down in the document entitled Articles of Union, the great principles for which this Church has always contended, and which are embodied in the Fundamental Act of this Synod, being distinctively conserved and set forth in said Articles.

"Whereas this Synod having, in the exercise of its own independent right, unanimously come to this resolution, did then, by express appointment, meet in Conference with the Synod of Victoria, in the Scots Church, Yarra-street (Geelong), on the evening of the said 6th November, and then and there unanimously resolved, in conference and concert with their brethren of the Synod of Victoria, to abide by what they had determined on separately, and go into Union with that Synod, on the basis or terms of said Articles; and one of the brethren, at the request of the Conference, offered up thanks to God for the happy issue to which these negotiations had come.

"Whereas another Conference was held with the said Synod, on the evening of the 7th November, in the vestry of the Free Church, Little Malop-street (Geelong), and it was there again unanimously resolved to abide by the resolution and agreement already come to, notwithstanding the threatened failure of the negotiations for Union which this Synod had at the time been carrying on with the United Presbyterian Church, with the view of coming to some common agreement that might include them in the Union contemplated.

"Whereas this Synod did, at an adjourned meeting held in Chalmers Church, Melbourne, on the 20th December, 1855, when a final attempt to bring the negotiations with the United Presbyterian Church to a more favourable issue failed, and these negotiations were consequently

broken off, resolved still to abide by their former resolution to unite with the Synod of Victoria, on the terms agreed on, if that Synod was prepared to go forward with said Union, even though the United Presbyterian Church was not united in it.

"Whereas in a Conference held with the Synod of Victoria, on the evening of the 20th December, for the purpose of ascertaining their views on this aspect of the case, that Synod did, after separation, deliberation, and consultation by itself, resolve to go forward with the Union with this Synod, and the two Synods did then and there, again in Conference, agree and covenant to proceed to its consummation and made arrangements for the same.

"Whereas this Synod did again, at a meeting held immediately after said Conference, separately and by itself, confirm and agree to stand by what had thus been in union and concert with the Synod of Victoria agreed upon and determined, and did record their thankfulness to the great Head of the Church for having guided them to a successful termination of their long and prayerful consultations and discussions on this important subject.

"And whereas the Rev. William Miller, minister of John Knox Church, Melbourne, was a member of the Union Committee of this Synod from its appointment in January, 1854, and the Rev. Arthur Paul, now minister of the Free Presbyterian Church at St. Kilda, was a member of that Committee from 5th April, 1855, and united with the other brethren in that Committee in all the recommendations which they made to the Synod in the progress of the negotiations, and in the final recommendation to go forward to the consummation of said Union.

"And whereas, the said William Miller, and the said Arthur Paul, and the Rev. Allan M'Vean, now minister of the Free Presbyterian Church, Brunswick, were members of Synod, and were present at the aforesaid meeting at Geelong, on 6th November, 1855, when the final resolution was come to to consummate the Union on the basis of the aforesaid articles, and consented to the same, and were present at the Conference held the same evening, with the Synod of Victoria, in the vestry of the Free Church, Little Malop-street, and at another meeting of this Synod held six weeks after in Melbourne, on the 20th December, 1855, first in conference with the other Synod, and afterwards separately and by itself; and on all these separate occasions united without dissent in the solemn determinations repeatedly come to to go forward with the Union on the aforesaid basis.

"And whereas it was a stipulation and arrangement in regard to the consummation of this Union, that the property belonging to each of the Synods should be secured by an Act of the Colonial Legislature, and various hindrances occurred, in the Providence of God, to prevent the Bill that was in course of preparation for this purpose, a draft of which had been submitted to and approved by the Synod, from being completed and brought into the Legislature with a view to being passed into an Act.

"Whereas at a meeting of this Synod, in April, 1856, it was attempted by the said William Miller, and Arthur Paul, and Allan M'Vean to open up anew and go back upon the question of Union, thus finally settled, and a motion was made by them with this view, that certain documents and minutes connected with these negotiations should be produced and laid upon the Synod's table.

"And whereas this attempt was found by the said Synod to be irregular and disorderly, and not to be permitted or tolerated, and the production of these documents for such a purpose refused.

"Whereas the said Arthur Paul, having been for a time Clerk of the

Union Committee of this Synod, and having retained in his possession a number of these minutes and documents, did himself print and publish a pamphlet, in which he quotes and makes use of said minutes and documents.

"And whereas this pamphlet was only put into the hands of each of the brethren after they were assembled in Synod, at their annual meeting, held in Melbourne in November, 1856, and in ignorance of the contents of said pamphlet, were informed by the said William Miller that he and the said Arthur Paul and the said Allan M'Vean had now great doubts as to going forward with the said Union, which they had thus repeatedly and solemnly consented to, and united with their brethren in determining and agreeing to, and that the Rev. Andrew Maxwell, Free Presbyterian minister of Kilmore, and the Rev. John M'Dougall, of the Gaelic Church, Geelong, who had both joined the Synod, after the Union had been solemnly determined on and agreed to, and were fully cognisant of the same, and took no objection whatever to it on their being received into the Court, and promising obedience to its judicatories, did also declare their sympathy with these doubts, and join with these brethren in craving a conference with the Synod, with the view of having them removed.

"Whereas this conference was held, and the brethren received the information and explanations they asked; and instructions were given to the brethren of this Synod, on the joint-committee of the two Synods for making arrangements for consummating the Union, to make inquiry in regard to certain points on which the brethren having doubts requested information.

"Whereas in the interval between this Synod and the next half-yearly meeting appointed to be held at Geelong, on the 7th day of September, 1857, it was found necessary to convene a *pro re nata* meeting of Synod, to deal with the said Arthur Paul in regard to said pamphlet; and the Synod having met and deliberated on the same, found that the Rev. Arthur Paul, a minister of this Church, had brought grave charges of deliberate unfaithfulness and corrupt motives against this Synod, and was thereby seeking to bring its authority into contempt, and that this delinquency was aggravated by the charges brought against the Synod of Victoria, based in a great measure on documents that were neither honourably obtained nor lawfully kept and used, and which were not fairly quoted, and was therefore deserving of severe reprehension; and that Mr. Paul should be required to retract the groundless and offensive charges he had thus made.

"And whereas the said Arthur Paul was reprehended accordingly by the Moderator, and instead of receiving the admonition thus tendered to him in the spirit of meekness, did then and there publicly declare that he did not in the least regard the censures of this Court, and appealed from their judgment to that of the Lord Jesus Christ at the last day; but, on a committee being appointed to deal with him in regard to his sin, was brought, as the brethren were willing to believe, in some good measure to repent of his rash and unseemly procedure in this matter, and agreed to retract those offensive charges, and expressed regret that he had not used language that would have conveyed his meaning without seeming to impugn the motives of his brethren, and to declare that he would not have made use of the documents on which these charges were founded if he had considered that they were so the property of this Synod that he could not lawfully do so.

"And whereas the retraction that Mr. Paul had thus publicly made was virtually withdrawn by him in a letter published in the *Argus* newspaper a day or two after the meeting of Synod.

"And whereas the said William Miller and Allan M'Vean and John M'Dougall declared in Court their agreement with Mr. Paul in the course he had pursued in printing and publishing said pamphlet, dissenting merely from a few unguarded expressions, and countenanced and abetted him in his contemptuous defiance of the Court by standing up to be rebuked with him, and saying that they considered that they shared the blame equally with him.

"And whereas these brethren have, some of them by addresses to their congregations and holding congregational meetings, and some of them by letters in the public press, and all of them by the public expression of opinion, continued to condemn and denounce this Synod as unfaithful to her principles, and have stirred up and fomented opposition and resistance on the part of people ill-informed in regard to the merits of the whole question, and have been taking active steps for dividing and disrupting this Church, while they are still under her authority and subject to her jurisdiction.

"And whereas, with a view to put a stop to these divisive courses in the most lenient and gentle form possible, and, perhaps, with too little regard to the authority and order which ought to be maintained in the Church, a proposal was made to them by this Synod to the following effect:—

"That this Synod did solemnly and deliberately and unanimously resolve to go into Union with the Synod of Victoria, on the terms laid down in the Articles of Union that, having solemnly, and deliberately, and unanimously come to this decision, they entered into a covenant or agreement with the other Synod to consummate the Union on these terms; that they are still impressed with the conviction of the importance and safety of Union on this basis, and, both on this account and on account of their solemn engagement, they are determined to go forward with it—

"That there being a minority now opposed to going forward with this Union, and threatening to resist it, the brethren still adhering to their convictions of the necessity and importance of this Union, and feeling their obligation to adhere to their covenant, are obliged by the very nature of our Presbyterian Constitution, to require of the minority that, while retaining their own sentiments and views, and recording their dissent, so far as they see necessary, they do not actively resist and oppose the carrying out this deliverance and this covenant, or they can no longer be permitted to remain within the body; and if they conceive they are impelled, by their convictions of duty, still to resist and oppose, there is no other course possible in the circumstances, without utterly setting at naught the fundamental principles of Presbytery, than that they retire at once in peace, and form a Church according to their own views; or that the painful necessity will be laid on this Synod of asserting the authority of the Synod, and exercising discipline on those persisting in this divisive and rebellious course.

"And whereas, instead of availing themselves of the opportunity thus afforded them of retiring peaceably and forming a Church according to their own views, if they could not submit to the decisions of the majority, they have agreed to and signed a document, declaring that they do not agree to the fundamental principles of Presbytery—that the minority should submit to the majority—thus asserting for themselves a right and power, as an independent party, to make terms and conditions with the majority,

"The Synod feels itself driven to the painful alternative of either exercising discipline on each of them, or declaring them no longer ministers of this Church; and being desirous, in the spirit of the terms

on which the proposal first made to them was tendered, to adopt the milder course, resolves to declare, and hereby does declare, that the Rev. William Miller, Rev. Arthur Paul, Rev. Allan M'Vean, and Rev. Andrew Maxwell are no longer ministers or members of this Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and are not entitled to the privileges and immunities which they have hitherto enjoyed as such; trusting, however, that God would yet give them light to see the error of the course they had been pursuing, and declaring that, on their acknowledging the same, it would be matter of satisfaction on the part of the Synod to receive them back again as brethren.

"And with respect to the representative elders who have joined these ministers on this occasion in the course they have pursued, the Synod, considering that none of them were in this Court when the negotiations for Union commenced, and that the three elders from Knox's Session, who preceded Mr. W. M. Bell and heard the deliberations and discussions on the subject, agreed to the Union, and that it was resolved on and settled before he entered the Court, and that two of them had come into the Court for the first time, does not feel it necessary to take any steps at present in regard to them."

APPENDIX C.

THE VINDICATION OF THEMSELVES BY THE MINORITY.

"We, the undersigned ministers and elders of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, at a meeting held in Geelong on the seventh and eighth days of April, eighteen hundred and fifty-seven years, in our own name and in the name of all who may be found adhering to us, declare and protest as follows:—

"Whereas by the Fundamental Act of this Synod it is declared, 'that this Synod do condemn, and by God's help resolve ever to testify against all interference of civil magistrates with the spiritual affairs of Christ's house, and against all ecclesiastical bodies countenancing or submitting to such interference, either directly or indirectly, and against all principles, tenets, and acts by which such interference on the part of the civil magistrate, or such submission on the part of ecclesiastical bodies, may be countenanced, and whereas the said Fundamental Act was drawn up expressly to set forth the distinctive principles of ministers adhering to the testimony of the Free Church of Scotland as set forth in the claim of right adopted by the General Assembly of 1842, and the protest taken by Dr. David Welsh and others, on the 18th day of May, 1843, in which protest it is set forth that the existing Established Church in Scotland is based upon conditions at variance with God's word in opposition to the doctrines and fundamental principles of the Church of Scotland—inconsistent with the freedom essential to the right constitution of a Church of Christ, and incompatible with the government which He, as the Head of this Church hath therein appointed, distinct from the civil magistrate.'

"And whereas the above quoted provision of the said Fundamental Act was intended specially to be a testimony against the subservient position of the present Established Church in Scotland, as set forth in the protest of David Welsh, and likewise to condemn the complicity therein of several Colonial Churches.

"Therefore, the undersigned ministers and elders hereby declare, that it is impossible for the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria to enter into relations either with the Established Church of Scotland as at present constituted, or with any Colonial Church countenancing or sympathising with her defections.

"And whereas the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria did, that is to say in the year 1853, enter into negotiations with the Presbytery of Melbourne, under the jurisdiction of the Synod of Australia, in connection with the Established Church of Scotland, and has been engaged in the said negotiations, after the separation of the said Presbytery from the said Synod of Australia, and its erection into an independent body as the Synod of Victoria; and the said negotiations issued in the adoption of a basis of Union by both sides, that is to say, both by the Synod of Victoria and the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

"And the said basis was framed in a series of Articles, setting forth the views of the Free Presbyterian Church, which are contained in the said Fundamental Act, yet so as that no testimony in express terms against the subserviency of the present Established Church of Scotland was contained therein, or connected therewith, but, nevertheless, it was uniformly understood by the ministers subscribing this present declaration and protest, that the said Synod of Victoria was prepared to refuse all correspondence and communion with the present Established Church of Scotland in future, and the undersigned ministers and elders believed that a Union so formed would promote the general interests of Presbyterianism in the Colony, and tend to advance the cause of Christ.

"And whereas, in the progress of the said negotiations for Union, it became necessary to apply to the Legislature of Victoria to sanction changes which would ensue in the tenure of property on both sides, in the event of the Union being consummated, and in furtherance of this object it was found necessary for each party to submit the case as affecting itself to legal counsel; and, in the carrying out of this intention, expression was given on the part of the Synod of Victoria to views of the Established Church of Scotland totally inconsistent with the true meaning of the Articles of Union, and subversive of the understanding which the undersigned had felt justified in entertaining, to the effect that no correspondence with the said Established Church would ever be sought in future.

"And whereas the expressions of continued attachment to the present Established Church of Scotland, so given forth by ministers of the Synod of Victoria, gave rise to a correspondence between the Union Committees of the two Synods, the general result of which was to reiterate the views and sentiments objected to by the undersigned; and no retraction of the said views and sentiments was ever obtained, although numerous but, as it appears to the undersigned, unsuccessful attempts have been made on the part of the Synod of Victoria to disavow as irregular the documents in which the said sentiments and views are contained; and whereas in several conferences held between the two Committees on Union the said sentiments of attachment to the present Established Church of Scotland have been personally avowed by members of the Union Committee of the Synod of Victoria.

"And whereas it appears from the foregoing particulars that the third and fourth articles of the basis of Union are not held by the Synod of Victoria in the only sense which can be reconciled with the Fundamental Act of this Church, it also appears, from published documents authorised by them, that they do not regard the first and second articles of said basis

as binding in their integrity, but have admitted and sanctioned, so far as they are concerned, a very material modification of the same.

"Therefore the undersigned ministers and elders do now feel, and have felt, since the expression given to the said sentiments, that that meaning of the Articles of Union, which can alone secure the consistency of the Free Presbyterian Synod of Victoria, has been abandoned, or otherwise has never been held by the Synod of Victoria.

"And whereas, in prosecution of their views on this subject, the undersigned have at various times since the appearance of this discrepancy urged on the brethren of their own Synod the necessity of a direct inquiry from the Synod of Victoria, with respect to its views as a Synod on this subject, in order that the prosecution of the Union should be abandoned, in case the Synod avowed the said sentiments of attachment to the Church of Scotland as now established, and determined to maintain communion with her after the Union had been effected. But all such propositions have been rejected by the majority now directing the policy of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and strenuous and unconstitutional efforts made to suppress all reference to the documents and expressions of sentiment referred to, especially—

"A motion for the production of certain documents and minutes in the hands of the Synod, made by the Rev. Allan M'Vean, on the 1st day of April, 1856, was negatived, against which decision such of the undersigned as had an opportunity dissented, and gave in reasons.

"And also, when several of the undersigned resolved to publish their grounds of objection against the Union, and quoted from private copies of those documents, to which the Synod had unconstitutionally refused to give them access, the said views and sentiments expressing attachment to the present Established Church of Scotland, which had been used by ministers of the Synod of Victoria, the majority of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church proceeded to censure the writer of the said publication, and to require an expression of his regret for having printed and issued the same, from which censure the writer and others solemnly appealed to the Great Head of the Church.

"And further, it having been determined, in a meeting of Synod in November, 1854, that a pastoral letter, embodying a statement of the whole case, should be published, for the information of the members and adherents of the Free Presbyterian Church, said pastoral letter has never yet been issued.

"And whereas the said majority, while admitting that the undersigned ministers and elders may consider themselves 'shut up by their convictions of duty still to resist and oppose,' yet declare 'that there is no other course possible in the circumstances without utterly setting at nought the fundamental principles of Presbytery, than that they retire at once in peace and form a Church according to their own views, or that the painful necessity will be laid on this Synod to assert the authority of the Synod and exercise discipline on those persisting in this divisive and rebellious course,' and are therefore trampling on convictions, which they admit may be conscientious, and so exercising lordship over the heritage of God.

"Therefore we, the undersigned ministers and elders of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, hereby protest that the majority now acting and directing the policy of this Synod are violating the Constitution on which the Free Presbyterian Church is founded, by making themselves parties to a Union which admits, according to the views of the Synod of Victoria, of communion and correspondence with the present Established Church of Scotland, by visiting with censure, and now, as is threatened, with exclusion from the Church, all who seek to vindicate the true

position of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, as a Body witnessing against the subserviency of the present Established Church of Scotland, and all ecclesiastical Bodies countenancing her in this subserviency.

"And we hereby protest and declare that the said majority so acting are not, and shall not be held to be, the true representatives of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, but that those adhering to the present protest and declaration are to be held as constitutionally representing the same, and entitled to all the rights and immunities and privileges belonging to the said Church.

"And we hereby declare that, by reason of the coercion now exercised, we are not at liberty to express and maintain our conscientious views in this place, and, as truly and constitutionally representing the said Church, we adjourn this present meeting of Synod, and hereby do adjourn, to meet at John Knox Church, Melbourne, on Tuesday next, the 14th day of April current, at 11 o'clock a.m.

"(Signed) Wm. Miller, Minister.
Arthur Paul, Minister.
Allan M'Vean, Minister.
Andrew Maxwell, Minister.
Wm. M. Bell, Elder.
Joseph Thomson, Elder.
Roderick M'Leod, Elder."

APPENDIX D.

Properties to be scheduled and exempted from the operation of the Synod of Victoria Bill, as belonging to the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria, consisting of the Rev. William Miller, Moderator; Messrs. Arthur Paul, Allan M'Vean, Andrew Maxwell, A. W. Sinclair, Alexander M'Intyre, and Robert Fleming, ministers; William M. Bell, Joseph Thomson, and Roderick M'Leod, elders.

Congregational.

1. The property at the corner of Swanston-street and Little Lonsdale-street east, belonging to John Knox congregation, of which the Rev. William Miller is at present the minister; also as belonging to that congregation—

2. The land with school buildings on Bridge-road, Richmond, given by Wm. M. Bell, Esq.

3. The land with the school buildings in Cremorne-street, Richmond, given by William Mitchell, Esq.

4. The land with school buildings at Euroke, Broadmeadows, given by Geo. S. Brodie, Esq.

5. The land with school buildings at East Prahran, given by John Langmuir and others.

6. One half-acre of land at Portland, given by Wm. M. Bell, Esq.

7. The property at Kilmore occupied by the congregation of which the Rev. Andrew Maxwell is at present the minister; as also belonging to that congregation—

8. Allotments, 1, 2, 3, 4 of Section 6, in the township of Wallan Wallan.

9. The Free Presbyterian reserve at Brunswick, occupied by the congregation of which the Rev. Allan M'Vean is at present the minister.

10. The reserve at Geelong, occupied by the Gaelic congregation, of which the Rev. Alexander M'Intyre is at present the minister.

11. The properties at Bellarine and East Bellarine, occupied by the congregation of which the Rev. A. W. Sinclair is the minister.

12. The property at Lethbridge, belonging to the congregation of which the Rev. Robert Fleming is the minister.

13. The Free Church reserve at the corner of Alma-road and Chapel-street, St. Kilda, at present in possession of the congregation of which the Rev. Arthur Paul is minister.

SYNODICAL.

1. Government grant-in-aid to the Free Presbyterian Church. Quarter of this so long as the present allocation continues. This has been already mutually agreed upon.

2. Quarter of Widows' Fund as it stood at the date of expulsion.

3. Quarter of Synod's Library.

4. The appointment of quarter of Trustees and Committee of Management of the Free Church Academy, Eastern Hill, now known as the Scotch College. Or otherwise—

Quarter of the value of the same to be paid to us, through Government, to be used only for a grammar School.

APPENDIX E.

IT may be noticed, in proof of the Australian aborigines having an African origin, that it is an opinion which has been often expressed that the great Malay stock of the human species spread over Polynesia was to be regarded as a branch of the African negroes. And there has recently been given by an eminent authority a decided opinion, founded on the character and peculiarities of the Australian language, that there is evidence afforded of a close affinity to the inhabitants of Mozambique, and other African tribes further south. Mr. Hyde Clarke, vice-president of the Anthropological Society of London, has examined the vocables and phrases of Australian tongues published at the expense of the Victorian Government by Mr. Smyth in his work on the aborigines, and has compared them with those of Eastern and South African tribes. After scrutinising the points of resemblance, in a paper read some time ago before the Society, he has pointed out the striking relationship between the two. Mr. John Green, late inspector of aborigines in Victoria, furnished a large number of the words and phrases which illustrate the nature and idiom of the language for Mr. Smyth's work, and his service has been recognised by Mr. Clarke sending him a digest of his paper. The following is the extract from the report, which has been kindly placed at the disposal of the writer:—

"ON THE YARRA DIALECT AND THE LANGUAGES OF AUSTRALIA IN CONNECTION WITH THOSE OF THE MOZAMBIQUE AND PORTUGUESE, AFRICA. By Hyde Clarke, V.P.A.S.—In this paper Mr. Clarke showed that the Yarra dialect of Melbourne and many others of North, East, South, and West Australia are to be identified with the Mozambique languages on the East Coast of Africa, the Muntu, Kirimau, Mirawi,

&c., or with those of Muntu or Caffre languages of Portuguese, South Africa. That was accompanied by a large table of words. Further, he showed that those Mozambique roots which are not represented in the Yarra, &c., are represented in the Echuca and other Australian languages that complete the chain of identity. Mr. Clarke points out that Mr. Caldwell had recognised the grammatical resemblances between the Australian and the Dravidian of India, and Dr. W. H. Bleek between Australian and Muntu. They had not been able to follow up these resemblances or to account for them. He stated on the facts in another paper that these languages belonged to a common group, but of which the members had undergone different processes of development and selection. He supported the view of Mr. Brough Smyth that Australia had been under the influence of a white race in ancient epochs. Apart from the evidence of language, grammar, and mythology, he dwelt on the curious fact that the names of the languages of Australia are negatives, one of these negatives, Kabi, being common throughout the world. He also referred to the geographical doctrine of the Four Worlds as taught in the school of Pergamos in proof that Australasia had in earlier epochs been known to the ancients."

It may be of some consequence, while calling attention to the origin of the Australian native race, to present a few specimens of traditionary ideas which have been entertained by the Victorian aborigines. These ideas seem to coincide in a remarkable degree, like the ancient beliefs of Eastern kingdoms, with primitive teachings derived from the Hebrew Hagiographa. There can be no doubt that the Australian aborigines have come originally from another part of the world; and as all other races point in the direction of what is believed to have been the cradle of the human family in the East, so must they. They are a race distinct from either the Negro, the Papuan, or the Malay, and it seems evident that they have sprung from an early ancestry in the history of mankind. On the supposition that they formed at one time an independent tribe dwelling on the continent of Africa, there need be no great difficulty in accounting for their religious conceptions by derivation from the original source of inspired truth—conceptions which became corrupted in course of transmission. It must be admitted that the extraordinary character of supernatural teaching, vouchsafed to man in the early ages, would exercise a potent influence on all surrounding nations, would extend that influence to distant communities, and would be conveyed through imperfect channels to distant generations. Hence the numerous traditionary records of Eastern nations, which indicate a common origin. These unitedly look to the sacred literature now chiefly in possession of the Western kingdoms—literature which admittedly came from the East, is found in its purity in the writings held as inspired, and which promises to revolutionise the thought and character of the whole world. The Assyrians more especially, from their superior practice of writing on permanent tablets, stand pre-eminent in their record of sacred ideas, which bear a striking agreement with biblical teaching. The inscriptions which have recently been brought to light by the efforts of science respecting the flood—coinciding in many minute particulars with the Scripture record—leave no room to doubt that the accounts on the Assyrian tablets have been based on the real historic events which have been accurately related and preserved in Scripture. Other traditionary records in Egypt and elsewhere, which have been brought to light in modern times, prepare us for hearing evidence, derived from other ancient peoples, of an acquaintance with the teachings of Revelation, more or less full and correct, formed at some remote period of their history.

The following Traditional Tales, collected from the lips of the older aborigines with whom the writer has personally come into contact, may help to throw light on the much-disputed question of the affinities of the Australians. The attempt has been made to present them as much as possible in their natural simplicity, though the writer confesses that, to his mind, their most striking features are the coincidences they present with the narratives of the Hebrew Scriptures, of which he believes they are but "broken lights."

The Saving of the Human Race from the Woman and the Serpent.—There are three Divine Intelligences acting in concert, Bûnd-jil, Tûd-ger, and Tar-rang or Dhar-na-nang, the first *father*, the second *brother*, the third *son*. They are benignant, and have often taken an active interest in the welfare of the human race. As for instance:—There was once a wicked woman who made alliance with a serpent, which she kept in the hollow trunk of a large fallen tree. When she saw "blackfellows" passing she "cooeyed" to them, and persuaded them to come near the tree to catch the fine bandicoot she promised to drive out. Instead of bandicoot the snake darted out, and stung the unwary victims to death. The destruction of mankind in this manner seemed inevitable. Bûnd-jil at length intervened, and sent brother Tûd-ger to prevent such a catastrophe. Tûd-ger appears near the tree in the likeness of a blackfellow, but when the woman makes her usual proposal, he insists on driving out the bandicoot for her to catch. When at length she reluctantly yields to his demand, she meets the fate she had dealt out to others.

The Saving of the Human Race from the Woman with the Fire.—Another wicked woman planned the destruction of the human race. She lived in a region where there was a great mountain. A large opening into the mountain-side, like a huge tunnel or wombat-hole, seemed as if it were a natural passage to attractive hunting-fields on the other side. This the woman lined with dead boughs of the peppermint tree and of all quick-burning woods, to give it the appearance of a large store for the use of a multitude. Near the mouth she had also a great number of mia-mias in the form of an encampment; and she kept the camp-fires constantly burning. The blacks who passed within sight readily believed in the presence of natives; and when, in answer to the cooey, they approached and found only one solitary woman watching the fires, she explained the astonishing circumstance, by saying that the people from the camp had gone a-fishing, to the hunt, or to hold corroboree, but if the visitors followed their tracks through the tunnel they would soon find them. When she saw them walk within the passage she set fire to the fuel at the mouth and smothered them to death. Bûnd-jil sent his son Tar-rang to deliver the human race from this ogress. Tar-rang appeared like a blackfellow, entered the tunnel as directed, but forced his way by a new passage, and suddenly coming upon the woman from behind, pushed her into the flames she had lighted for his destruction.

Tradition of a Deluge.—Among the aborigines of the Portland district there is a tradition that a flood destroyed the whole human race with the exception of one man, who was saved by one of the great powers taking hold of his long spear and drawing him up into the clouds from the top of a volcanic hill (Mount Eccles). On the flood passing away the man returned, and became the father of the new race of men.

The First Obtaining of Fire.—A maiden, whose native name was Mûn-mûn-dik, had somehow or other become the sole owner of fire, which she kept in the end of a yam-stick. (The yam-stick, it may be explained, is a rod about 5 feet long, the point of which is hardened by fire to fit it for digging up roots out of the earth). The maiden used the fire for her

own convenience and comfort, but no persuasion could make her share the benefits with others, and all attempts at securing the treasure by force or fraud proved unsuccessful. Bûnd-jil, however, sent his son to the assistance of the race. Failing to persuade the fire-maiden to a voluntary surrender, he had recourse to stratagem. Having buried a poisonous snake in a great ant-hill, he asks her to come and help him to dig up the ants' eggs—considered a delicacy. She, of course, digs up the snake. Tar-rang calls out, "Hit it, hit it!" As she strikes the creature with her yam-stick the fire is set free. Tarrang seizes it, and bestows it upon men. To prevent the maiden ever resuming her monoply, he removes her to a place in the sky, where she became the "Seven Stars." "She is to be seen there now."

The Castle of the Evil Spirit.—Ta-ga-din was the house of the Wicked One. It was a most formidable and strongly fortified place among the wild ranges on the Big River, one of the tributaries of the Goulburn. The "Blacks" of Coranderrk frequently go a day's journey to the neighbourhood in search of pheasants, lyre-birds, and other game; but they scrupulously keep aloof from the spot. They have been taught in early life how the Wicked Spirit cooeys to the Blacks, entices them to his stronghold, and keeps them as miserable captives; boys, especially, being the object of his pursuit, that he may turn them into demons like himself. Bûnd-jil, they say, tried many plans to break down the mighty stone walls of this castle. Appearing, by his son or brother, in the form of man for this purpose, he found the perpendicular walls could not be scaled. But at last an invisible agent passed over the castle in a big black cloud, and sent down great flashes of fire which split the rocks in pieces, and opened a way for the prisoners to escape. The enemy has never been able to rebuild his house.

Return from the Dead.—Anyone having before death drunk water from the moon will come back to life; but anyone having drunk from the native pigeon (Mûn-gû-bra) will never come to life again. By this restoration to life is understood reappearance in another human form. There is no possibility, unfortunately, of ascertaining beforehand who has drunk from the moon, and who from the pigeon; no one could tell to which class he himself or anyone else belonged, nor was there any knowledge of where either kind of water was to be obtained, or of how it was drunk. An old Black, Jamie Webster, whom I personally knew, was a singular illustration of this delusion. He maintained to the last day of his life that Mr. John Green, Manager at Coranderrk, was his deceased brother in new form. No assertion or argument could drive the notion out of his head. He clung to Mr. Green as to his real brother, and always took up his abode as near as possible to him, displaying the utmost confidence and esteem, and invariably telling him where he was going when he went to fish or hunt. When he spoke of matters which had occurred in his brother's lifetime, he expected Mr. Green to join in the conversation, as if he knew all about the events. To all Mr. Green's protestations of ignorance, he would reply in the most serious manner: "You not 'member—you forget—you not tumble down (die) yet. That long time before you tumble down." When Mr. Green spoke in his hearing of what was revealed in Scripture concerning the unseen world, Jamie implicitly believed, and his assurance was confirmed that his brother had come from the dead, and was simply relating what he had seen and heard in another world.

It only remains that we notice the striking similarity, in various important particulars, between the ideas of the Australian aborigines respecting the invisible world, and those of the ancient nations of the East. There is the supernatural if not divine Personality of Bûnd-jil and his associates,

Brother Tûd-ger and Son Tar-rang, constituting a Triad of Supreme Beings. In accordance with these spiritual conceptions, Brahminism supplies the idea of Heaven-Father, the oldest religious appellation to be found in heathen literature descriptive of the Supreme Intelligence of the universe. The ancient popular idea became embodied also in the worship offered to Buddha, although it was not a part of his teaching that he had any claim to divine honours. The same notion of a divine Personality, transmitted, doubtless, from a remote antiquity, has been expressed by the Greeks in the Zeus-Pater, and by the Romans in their Jupiter.

What is still more remarkable is that in accordance with the Australian idea of a Triad of deities, there is, in the mythologies of Brahma, Assyria, Egypt, &c., the primary conception of Triads. In the Pantheon of the Assyro-Babylonian there is a distinct order of Triads. The oriental Triad consisted of three gods, each having a consort. The Egyptian had his god, the Consort and the Son. Not to lengthen comments, the antagonistic principles of good and evil, with the kind spirit and the cruel in the Australian creed, have their counterpart in the belief of the ancient Persians that two principles divided the universe. And all point to the Hebrew faith as the primary source of a pure monotheism coupled not altogether obscurely in the Old Testament with a holy Trinity, and as the origin also of an eternal opposition of good and evil, right and wrong. We have in the Hebrew belief the only purely Semitic religion known among men, embodying in the earliest ages those elementary conceptions which have been realised in the historical facts of incarnation and redemption, that form the essential basis of Christianity.

APPENDIX F.

"To the Rev. ADAM CAIRNS, D.D., by the Presbytery of Melbourne, on the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the ministry.

"REVEREND FATHER AND BROTHER,—We, your co-Presbyters in the Presbytery of Melbourne, desire to unite with the congregation over which, until recently, you so long and so ably presided in this city, and with numerous Christian friends in other Churches in recording, on this memorable occasion, our gratitude to the God of all grace for sparing you to witness the fulfilment of the unusually lengthened period of half a century's work in the service of Christ.

"Divinely led, in early youth, you were happily enabled to follow in the footsteps of several generations of honoured forefathers, by consecrating yourself to the work of God.

"We deem it to have been a signal token of God's favour to you, in that it pleased Him to put you into the ministry at a time, early in this century, when a great revival of religion had set in in your native land, and in that He brought you within the circle of those devout and honoured men who were at the head of that great movement.

"We can also trace the leadings of God's providence and grace in the work which He gave you to do during the first half of your ministry, not only in preaching the gospel in important spheres of usefulness, but in preparing you to take a prominent part in the discussion of great religious and ecclesiastical principles, which have since operated largely in moulding the rising Presbyterian Churches in these Colonies.

"We desire also to recognise the wisdom of God in selecting in you for His service in this Colony one who had been trained in the home of evangelism and Presbyterianism at a time when it was of the last consequence that the embryo Church in this Colony should be built on foundations which had stood unshaken through fire and flood in the land of our fathers.

"We further wish to record our sense of the favour of God to this Church and land in sending to Melbourne, at a time when the city and Colony were in the crisis of their destiny, a minister well known for his decided convictions, his high attainments, his distinguished abilities as a public speaker, his untiring energy, and his unflinching courage, and for his brotherly sympathy with all Christian Churches and agencies in this land, which were engaged in prosecuting the work of the Lord.

"We would express our gratitude to the Father of all Mercies for having spared you for a quarter of a century in the land of your adoption to preach the gospel, and to take a prominent part in founding the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and promoting generally the interests of morality and religion.

"Finally, we would record our profound thankfulness that you are still spared in God's good providence in our midst to give us the benefit of your example and counsels, and we desire to make it our earnest prayer, at the throne of grace, that our Heavenly Father may bestow on you now all the blessings which He has promised to a well-spent life, and that you may enjoy His felt presence in a happy old age.

"Signed, in name and by authority of the Presbytery of Melbourne, this the twenty-fourth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight, by

"Charles Strong, Moderator.
"James Ballantyne, Clerk.
"D. Macdonald, D.D."

APPENDIX G.

SUBSCRIPTION LIST—ORMOND COLLEGE.

Francis Ormond	£22,571	0	0
William Russell ..	1,000	0	0
T. and A. Chirnside	1,000	0	0
Friend of the College	1,000	0	0
William Cumming	1,000	0	0
John L. Currie ..	500	0	0
John Cumming ..	500	0	0
Andrew Scott	500	0	0
James MacBain ..	500	0	0
Robert Simson ..	500	0	0
John Simson	500	0	0
John Matheson ..	500	0	0
William Wilson ..	500	0	0
Joseph M'Donald ..	500	0	0
Proprietors Plains Station	500	0	0
John Ware	500	0	0
W. K. Thomson ..	350	0	0
Sir James M'Culloch	300	0	0
Robert Harper ..	250	0	0
A. Morrison	200	0	0
Thomas Baillie ..	200	0	0
William Taylor ..	200	0	0
Thomas Scott	200	0	0
Rev. A. M'Vean ..	100	0	0
James Balfour.. ..	100	0	0
J. Hood	100	0	0
Thomas Russell ..	100	0	0
William Russell ..	100	0	0
George Russell ..	100	0	0
Walter Laidlaw ..	100	0	0
R. J. Jeffray	100	0	0
Thomas M'Nicol ..	100	0	0
William Lewis ..	100	0	0
E. Grant	100	0	0
Geo. Morrison.. ..	£100	0	0
J. M. Elder	100	0	0
Jas. Blackwood	100	0	0
Richard Blackwood	100	0	0
Miss Gordon	100	0	0
W. Smith..	100	0	0
J. Kininmonth ..	100	0	0
J. M. Davies	100	0	0
John Logan	100	0	0
R.P.	100	0	0
M.C., for Billiard Table	100	0	0
Andrew Harper ..	50	0	0
John M'Vean	50	0	0
Thomas Armstrong	50	0	0
A. R. Blackwood ..	52	10	0
R. Morrison	50	0	0
D. M'Pherson.. ..	50	0	0
R. Smith	50	0	0
Jas. Campbell.. ..	50	0	0
John Finlay	50	0	0
James Winter	50	0	0
Rev. Geo. Tait ..	50	0	0
A. Fisken..	25	0	0
S. Renwick	20	0	0
Joseph Mack	10	0	0
John Adams	5	0	0
R. Watson	5	0	0
J. R. Ross	5	0	0
J. Wilberforce Stephen	2	2	0
	£36,595	12	0
Scholarships	1,200	0	0
	£37,795	12	0

APPENDIX H.

COPY OF THE BILL.

THE SCOTS CHURCH (MELBOURNE) BILL.—"Notice is hereby given that application is intended to be made to the Parliament of Victoria, in the next Session of Parliament, for LEAVE to bring in a BILL to provide that, upon the terms, and subject to the provisions therein mentioned, the congregation of the Scots Church, Collins-street, in the City of Melbourne, shall be SEPARATED and DISJOINED from the Presbyterian

Church of Victoria, established under the provisions of the Act of the Parliament of Victoria No. 82, and shall thenceforth be a congregation free in all things spiritual and temporal from any superintendence, control, or interference whatever of the said Presbyterian Church of Victoria, and shall thenceforth occupy, as nearly as may be, the position of a congregation of Presbyterians under the Act of the Governor and Legislative Council of New South Wales, 8th William IV., No. 7, before the passing of the Act of the Governor and Legislative Council of New South Wales 4th Victoria, No. 18, having for its standards of religious belief the standards of the Established Church of Scotland, for its ecclesiastical government, the formularies and rules of discipline, as near as may be, of the said Established Church, with power, nevertheless, to the Kirk Sessions of the said congregation to make, alter, or repeal rules and forms of procedure for the management of its own affairs.

"Also to provide that the said congregation shall, subject to the provisions in the said Bill contained, so long as it shall continue its adherence to the standards of religious belief of the Established Church of Scotland be entitled to have and enjoy, absolutely free from any claim, control, interest, or interference of the said Presbyterian Church of Victoria, or of any other person, the use of the lands specified in the schedule to the Bill, being Crown Allotments 6, 7, 8 and 9, Section 11, town of Melbourne, parish of North Melbourne, county of Bourke, with the Church, manse, messuages, warehouses, and other buildings thereon, and the rents and profits thereof, subject nevertheless to all encumbrances, debts, and claims (other than any claim of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria) then subsisting, affecting the same, or any portion thereof, all of which encumbrances, debts, and claims shall from that date become and thenceforth continue the debts and liabilities of the said congregation, provided that every adherent who shall have heretofore contributed moneys expended in buildings on the said lands, and who shall not concur in such separation, shall be entitled on proof of his claim to the satisfaction of the Trustees of the said lands within the time therein mentioned, to be repaid by the said congregation the full amount so contributed, and the same until so paid shall be a charge upon such lands.

"Also, to provide that the Trustees for the time being of the said lands shall, subject to any trusts created by any deed of grant or otherwise specially affecting any such property, hold the same upon the trusts and subject to the provisions, as near as may be, prescribed or implied by the said Act of the Governor and Legislative Council of New South Wales 8, William IV., No. 7, so far as the same can be made applicable.

"Also, to declare that, for the purposes of any dealing with the temporalities of the seceded congregation under the Act of the Parliament of Victoria No. 391, the said congregation shall be deemed to be a denomination within the meaning of the 2nd section of that Act, and the Moderator of Session for the time being of the said congregation shall be deemed its authorised representative within the meaning of the 4th section of the said Act.

"And also for such incidental powers as may be deemed necessary or expedient.

"And notice is hereby also given that the lands intended to be taken under, or the use whereof will be affected by the said Bill, are as follow:—All those pieces of land being Crown Allotments 6, 7, 8, and 9, Section 11, town of Melbourne, parish of North Melbourne, county of Bourke, together with the Church, manse, messuages, warehouses, and other buildings thereon, and that a plan and duplicate thereof respectively, and a copy of the notice published in the *Govern-*

ment Gazette of the intended application to Parliament, will be deposited for public inspection at the office of the Board of Land and Works, and at the office of the Clerk of the Assembly, and at the office of the Clerk of Petty Sessions of the Petty Sessional district of Melbourne, on or before the 30th day of April, 1884.

"And notice is also hereby given that copies of the said Bill will be deposited with the Clerk of Legislative Assembly at least one day before the assembling of Parliament, and that the title will be, 'A Bill to Regulate the Temporal Affairs of the Scots Church, Melbourne.'

"Dated the 2nd day of April, 1884.

"EDWARD ENGLAND,

"Malleson, England and Stewart, 24 Queen-street, Melbourne, Parliamentary Agents, and Agents for the promoters of the Bill."

APPENDIX I.

RESOLUTIONS BEARING ON THE PECULIAR CONSTITUTION OF THE SCOTS CHURCH.

1. "That the Special Commission of Assembly, appointed on the 8th day of May, 1884, relative to the Scots Church Bill, be continued until it winds up its affairs.

2. "That the attention of the Trustees of the Scots Church and manse properties be called to the Tenth Section of the Act 8 William IV., No. 7, and that the Trustees be instructed that it is necessary for them to obtain the consent of the General Assembly to the application of the rents, issues, and profits of the properties over the sum of £150 per annum payable to the officiating minister, if any.

3. "That a Standing Committee be appointed to obtain from the Trustees of the Scots Church, manse, and school properties, before the first day of May in every year, the account mentioned in Section 12 of the Act 8 William IV., No. 7; and also an account of the rents, issues, and profits of the school property, and of the expenditure thereof; to examine such accounts; to receive proposals for the application of the rents, issues, and profits mentioned in Section 10 of the said Act; and to report on such accounts and proposals to the Assembly or Commission of Assembly; and that the accounts already furnished be referred to such Committee for examination and report.

4. "That as the Act 8 William IV., No. 7, commits in definite form the control of the temporal affairs of the Scots Church congregation to the Trustees, it is desirable, in present circumstances, to see that this provision of the Act be strictly observed, and to remind the Trustees that, however they may avail themselves of the co-operation of members of the congregation to assist them in its management, they are solely responsible for what is done relative to the provisions of the Act aforesaid.

5. "That the Assembly, considering the position of the Scots Church congregation, and the vacancy in the pulpit, direct the Presbytery of Melbourne to hold a Presbyterial visitation, in accordance with Rule 11 of Section 2 of Chapter 1, specially with the view of bringing the congregation into proper relations with the Church, and further, it had been agreed that the first resolution should be considered in open Court."

APPENDIX K.

BASIS OF FEDERATION.

1. "The final Court of Advice or arbitration among the Federated Churches, in respect to all matters legitimately brought before it, and in respect to these matters alone, is called 'The Federal Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches of Australia and Tasmania.'

2. "The names of the present Supreme Courts of the Federated Churches remain unaltered.

3. "Each Supreme Court retains full control of its properties and funds and has power in all matters connected therewith, except as hereafter provided.

4. "Each such Supreme Court has unfettered power in all other matters now under its jurisdiction, except as hereafter provided.

5. "The decisions of such Supreme Courts are final in all cases, except when any such Supreme Court decides, with the consent of parties, to refer a matter to the Federal Assembly for advice or arbitration.

6. "The Supreme Court with which the case so referred had originated adopts *simpliciter* the decision of the Federal Assembly in regard to it, and proceeds thereafter, on its own authority, to give the required effect to the decision.

7. "Members of the Supreme Court, who disapprove of the decision thus adopted, retain the right of dissent, but the privilege of dissent thus exercised and recorded has no other result except to relieve the dissentients personally from taking any part in giving formal effect to the decision.

8. "The Theological Halls and Seminaries of the Federated Churches are under the general supervision of the Federal Assembly; and all students of theology, wherever they may have been trained, are required to undergo the examinations prescribed by the Federal Assembly through its Board.

9. "The appointment of professors and teachers in the Theological Halls and Seminaries remains, as at present, in the hands of the Supreme Courts with which they are respectively connected.

10. "The Heathen Mission operations of the Federated Churches are likewised placed under the supervision and direction of the Federal Assembly.

11. "The various Supreme Courts, while required to report their Home Mission operations to the Federal Assembly, and the arrangements made by them for the support of the ministry within their bounds, are not otherwise limited thereanent by any action of the Federal Assembly.

12. "All regulations which bear on matters affecting the general interests of the Federated Church are framed by the Federal Assembly.

13. "The foregoing regulations may be enlarged or amended from time to time, provided always that no change be made on the Articles of this Basis, unless, after having been adopted by the Federal Assembly, it be remitted to all the Presbyteries of the Federated Churches and be approved by a majority of them."

APPENDIX L.

THE FEDERAL ASSEMBLY'S PETITION AGAINST THE ANNEXATION OF THE NEW HEBRIDES BY THE FRENCH.

"To Her Most Gracious Majesty Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, &c.

"The Petition of the Federal Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches of Australia and Tasmania

"Humbly Sheweth—

1. "That your Majesty's Petitioners are deeply interested in the New Hebrides Islands, having for nearly thirty years assisted in carrying forward the work of civilisation among the cannibals of the group by Presbyterian missionaries, in which have been expended over £180,000 of British money, while six missionaries and many native assistants have fallen by the hands of the savages.

2. "That, notwithstanding these trials, nineteen of the islands of the group are now occupied by the mission, and sixteen European missionaries, with their wives, and one hundred and thirty-three native teachers are employed in the work, while a missionary schooner is wholly supported, at an annual expense of £2,000, to assist the mission.

3. "That fourteen languages of these islands have been reduced to writing, and the Scriptures, in whole or in part, translated into these languages, and printed and paid for by the native Christians; that by the missionary teaching and example, life and property are now safe on sixteen islands, and comparatively safe on the others, where formerly murders were frequent; that there are nearly twelve thousand Christian converts, whose lives are peaceful, industrious, and exemplary, and that the mission is now being more fully developed.

4. "That your Majesty's Petitioners view with grief and alarm the landing of French troops, and the establishment and continued occupation of military posts at Havannah Harbour, Efaté, and at Sandwich Harbour, Mallicolo, as being in violation of the treaty with your Majesty's Government of 1878, renewed in 1882, and as imperilling our mission work and the general welfare of the islanders.

5. "That while deeply grateful for the efforts of your Majesty's Government to maintain the independence of these islands, your Majesty's Petitioners earnestly plead that such effective measures may be taken as shall lead to the immediate withdrawing of the French troops, and prevent the intrusion of any other Foreign Power into the New Hebrides. And that prompt measures may be taken to protect the lives, and property, and work of your Majesty's most loyal subjects on these islands.

6. "That we can assure Your Most Gracious Majesty that the islanders are loyally attached to Your Majesty's person and throne, and have expressed their sincere desire to be acknowledged as subjects of the British Empire, or taken under Your Majesty's protection.

"May it, therefore, please Your Most Gracious Majesty to take this petition into favourable consideration, and grant the prayer thereof.

"And Your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

"Signed, &c."

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